POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

THE BURNING OF CATHERINE HAYES.

Vol. III.—No. 36.

THE CRIME OF CATHERINE HAYES

Who was Burnt at the Stake for Petit Treason.

"O, curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Othello," Act III., Sc. 3.

PART III.

THE first few weeks after the terrible murder of Mr. Hayes must have been fraught with no little anxiety even to the adamantine Catherine, for the progress of events, although not pointing to her guilt, must have been awful for her to contemplate. The head of her murdered husband had been publicly exposed, and was now carefully preserved for further identification; the remaining portion of the body was being diligently sought by many of the good citizens who had constituted themselves private detectives, and the relations and acquaintances of Hayes, who felt confident as to the head belonging to that unfortunate man, were with the greatest energy endeavouring to unravel the mystery and bring home the crime to the guilty.

It seems extraordinary that the justices of those days should have been so slow to act, and that the officials should have been so thick-headed as to put the murderers on their guard by their movements. One would imagine that they cared very little about the matter, and allowed events to take their course, indifferent as to whether the perpetrators of the foul deed were punished or went free, desiring only that the affair should blow over as quickly as possible. There was no organised detective force at that time, and the discovery of crime was left entirely in the hands of amateurs. Mr. Longmore, to whom I have already referred, was known as a very astute gentleman in following up clues to crime, and he had plenty of opportunities of studying the shady side of life at his hostelry in King Street, Westminster, for the Green Dragon was patronised by some of the worst characters in London. So when anybody was "wanted," the authorities never failed to call upon mine host for any information they required. Indeed, the little private bar parlour was frequently occupied by the magistrates taking evidence, and on more than one occasion thieves had been examined, convicted, and sent to prison from that house.

Mr. Longmore upon the occasion of this tragedy, though, had a much keener interest in discovering the perpetrators of the crime. In the first place, he had convinced himself that the head that was exhibited in St. Margaret's Churchyard was that of his relation, Mr. Hayes; and, in the second place, his interest was increased by the fact that at that gentleman's demise he (Mr. Longmore) was to have certain securities returned to him. So he determined to do his best to lay the murderers by the heels.

Taking into his confidence a Mr. Ashby, who had been on the most friendly terms with Hayes, they arranged to each seek an interview with Catherine Hayes, and afterwards compare the stories told them.

Mr. Ashby was the first to see the lady. Calling upon her about ten o'clock, he was ushered into the new apartments which Catherine had taken over Mr. Jones's distillery, and immediately noticed that she was somewhat agitated at seeing him. She came to the point at once though, and saved the visitor's inquiry as to the whereabouts and health of her husband. Closing the door, and drawing her chair close up, she placed her finger upon her lips as if to enjoin his silence and attention, when she looked round in a mysterious manner, and in a low tone of voice made the following statement:—

"You, Mr. Ashby, were, I know, always a dear friend of my husband's. I feel that I can trust you with a secret, and that you will not betray your friend, but lend your valuable assistance on his behalf. Some time ago," said Catherine, "Mr. Hayes happened to have a dispute with a man, and from words they came to blows, and, unfortunately, Mr. Hayes killed him. The wife of the deceased made up the affair, on Mr. Hayes promising to pay her a certain annual allowance; but he, not being able to make it good, she threatened to inform against him, on which he absconded."

This statement, which I have repeated word for word as it was sworn to by Mr. Ashby at the trial, might have been ingenious enough, but it also seemed highly improbable, for it was known positively to that gentleman that not only was Mr. Hayes a most peaceful individual but that his circumstances would have enabled him to pay the blood money easily enough. However, he affected great sympathy, and said that if he could be of any assistance Mrs. Hayes was to command him.

Mr. Longmore also doubted the truth of this story, and, in accordance with the arrangement, in the course of a few days also paid a visit and inquired as to the whereabouts of his friend. Alive to the situation, she said, "I suppose Mr. Ashby has told you the circumstances of my husband's misfortune, for he knows that you, as another of his dearest friends, would keep everything secret."

"No," said Mr. Longmore, "I have not seen Mr. Ashby for a considerable time. What is the matter? Is Mr. Hayes imprisoned for debt?"

"No," she replied; "it is much more serious than that."

"Why," said Mr. Longmore sternly, fixing his eyes steadily upon the woman, "has he murdered anybody?"

To this she nodded in the affirmative, and desired her visitor to walk into an adjoining room, and, adopting the same mysterious manner she had displayed with Ashby, told almost the same story. But liars should have good memories, and she made a slip that was most carefully noted down by the sharp gentleman. She told him that her husband was in hiding in Hertfordshire, whilst she had said to Ashby that he had taken ship to Portugal.

This was but a little slip on the lady's part, but it was enough to satisfy Longmore that she was lying to him, so he followed up the advantage he had gained by expressing surprise, and asked if Mr. Hayes had not been afraid to travel into that part of the country, which was infested with footpads and highwaymen. But Catherine declared that he had gone well armed, having taken four pistols with him.

This, again, Longmore knew to be a lie, for no man in those days would travel by himself, armed in such a manner, if he wished to escape arrest. He would have been immediately seized and made to account for himself, the natural inference being that he was one of the gentlemen of the road. This he referred to, and Catherine, ever ready with an answer, assured him that this very thing had happened. He was actually arrested and taken before a magistrate, charged with being a highwayman, but a gentleman who was casually present, happening to know Mr. Hayes, gave bail for his appearance.

Again Longmore knew that she was telling a lie, for no magistrate was allowed to liberate anybody charged as a

highwayman upon the bail of one person in those days. The law required that at least two parties should bail a person charged on suspicion of having robbed on the highway.

At that moment Mrs. Springate (who, it will be remem-

Placed her finger upon her lips.

bered, occupied rooms in the house where the murder was committed) knocked at the door, and was admitted by Catherine Hayes. She was introduced to Mr. Longmore, and was asked to corroborate her statements, which she readily enough did, Mrs. Hayes telling the gentleman after Springate had left that it was for the reason that Mrs. Springate knew of her husband's trouble that she had paid her rent at the other house.

Down went the name of Springate in the amateur detective's mental notebook, and he was more convinced than ever that there had been foul play. Commiserating with madam's misfortunes, and expressing a sincere wish that matters would be different with her, he took his leave, and at once called together a court of inquiry in the bar parlour of the Green Dragon. Patrick the tailor was present, and gave the statement made by his fellow-workman to the effect that a day or two after the finding of the head he had left Mr. Hayes well in bed. This proved further contradiction. It was suggested that another visit should be paid to Catherine Hayes, but this was overruled, it being feared by Mr. Longmore that further inquiries would cause them to become suspicious and take to flight.

So it was determined that all those concerned in the inquiry should together call upon Mr. Westbrook, who had the head preserved in spirits, that they should scrutinise the features carefully, and that, if they agreed that it belonged to Mr. Hayes, application should be made at once for the arrest of Catherine Hayes and her associates.

It seems hardly possible that such a crime as this could have been allowed to pass for weeks without a capture, especially with such overwhelming evidence to hand. They must have been very slow in those days, but thanks to the energy and activity of the innkeeper, matters were to move very quickly during the next few hours. Everyone of those who viewed the head was prepared to swear that it belonged to Hayes, and they blamed themselves for not examining it earlier, which no doubt would have been done had not the woman from Kingsland claimed it as her husband's, who had been missing.

With post haste they made their way to the house of Justice Lambert, who took down their several statements, and at once made out warrants for the arrest of Catherine Hayes, Thomas Wood, Mrs. Springate, and the young tailor. The magistrate undertook to accompany the officers and prosecutors to the house, and superintend the capture, which it was arranged should be made that same night.

Imagine a procession of some half-dozen constables, with crown-capped staffs, followed by half a dozen tradesmen, and in the midst of all the corpulent magistrate, dressed in knee breeches, silk stockings, long coat, and three-cornered hat, carrying an immense gold-headed cane, walking through the streets of Westminster about nine o'clock upon that March night, those at the head of the procession carrying lanterns, all marching steadily together in the cause of justice.

As the Abbey clock chimed the half hour, they halted at the house of Mr. Jones, the distiller, and knocked loudly. That worthy, who was about to retire for the night, opened the door, and was not a little alarmed at the sight of this small army of besiegers.

He was evidently annoyed, too, at being thus unceremoniously disturbed at that time of night, and in no very polite language demanded to know their business. His wrath was, however, soon turned to very humble civility, for Justice Lambert stepped forth and bade him stand aside in the king's name, and having ascertained the situation of the

The magistrate demanded admission.

rooms occupied by Catherine Hayes, ascended the stairs, followed by the whole of his attendants.

With a heavy rap, rap at the door with the gold knob of his cane, the magistrate, in a stern voice, demanded admis-

sion. There was the sound of startled movements within, and a trembling female voice begged time to dress before opening the door. "One minute only," replied the justice, and he drew forth his ponderous watch and counted the seconds.

"Do your duty," said he to the officers, and the broad shoulders of two of the men forced the door. It was an extraordinary sight that met their eyes, and proved the most damning spot upon this accursed woman's soul. Ay, even more damnig than the murder itself.

The female, with but scanty linen upon her body, was hastily trying to cover herself with clothing, whilst seated bare-legged upon the bed was the young tailor. His name was Thomas Billings, the son of Catherine Hayes by the officer who had seduced her before the marriage. Her own

THRICE SHE IMPRESSED A KISS UPON THE COLD LIPS.

son her paramour!—her chief accomplice in the murder of her husband! Too terrible to contemplate!

He was identified by his fellow-workman, Patrick, and both he and the woman having hurriedly dressed, they, together with Mary Springate, were marched off to the house of Justice Lambert, where they were each examined separately, all positively protesting their innocence of the crime. They were, however, committed to appear for re-examination on the following day before Justice Lambert and three other magistrates. Mrs. Springate was sent to the Gatehouse, Thomas Billings to New Prison, and Catherine Hayes to Tothill Fields Bridewell. Of course the further examination failed to shake their protestations, but it convinced the justices more than ever of their guilt. In the meanwhile, it was thought advisable to defer their trial until Thomas Wood had been arrested, when they could all be placed in the dock together.

Catherine Hayes was the coolest of the three, and, ever ready to devise means by which she thought to throw off the scent, she made a most extraordinary application. She desired of the magistrates permission to view the head that the prosecution claimed to be that of her husband. After due consideration, this was accorded, and Mr. Westbrook, the surgeon who had the gruesome object in his possession, was instructed to keep a keen eye upon the lady's behaviour during the time she was viewing it.

It would seem that this woman had herself elected to pass through the ordeal that most murderers have to submit to in France, by confronting their victim—a system which was so graphically described in the first number of this journal, under the heading "The Morgue of Paris." It is a severe test to be brought into the presence of the body and swear before God that you are innocent, and many a strong nerve has been shattered at this period. Catherine Hayes had, however, begged that she might, as she said, satisfy herself that the head really was that of her husband, who, she declared, had not written to her for many weeks. Let us follow her to Mr. Westbrook's house, whither she was taken by four officers.

Entering the surgeon's operating room, she is desired to be seated, whilst Mr. Westbrook brings in the large glass jar containing the head. It is covered over with a black cloth, which has the appearance of a diminutive pall. Desiring Mrs. Hayes to step up to the table, the surgeon quickly snatches away the covering, and the face is fully exposed to view.

The spirit has kept it in excellent preservation, and there is little change in its appearance since the deed was committed. The jagged flesh hanging to the throat where the inexperienced hands have cut and hacked it is very conspicuous, and there is an expression of scorn upon the face which is curious to behold. The keen eyes of the surgeon are fixed upon the woman. Not for a moment losing her presence of mind, she places her hand to her brow and staggers back dramatically. "My God!" she exclaims, "it is he! It is my dear husband's head!" Then, taking up the glass case, she clasps it to her breast and gives vent to a

flood of tears. Mr. Westbrook, desiring to further test her, offers to take the head out from the spirits so that she may examine it more minutely. This is done, and, having carefully wiped it with soft cloths, he tenderly places it in the woman's hands.

Again she sobs hysterically, and then, holding it between her two hands, she takes a long, loving look at it. Then, drawing it slowly towards her once, twice, thrice, she imprints a kiss upon the cold lips, and turning to the surgeon she implores him to cut for her a lock of her dear one's hair that she may take it with her to the grave. Mr. Westbrook takes the head from her and slowly returns it to the glass case. Then, turning to her and looking steadily at the shameless actress, says sternly, "No, madam; you have had too much blood from his poor body already."

Catherine Hayes turns pale, a giddiness comes over her, and she would have fallen had not the officers caught her and conducted her, half fainting, to a chair.

She had stood the ordeal well; but the interview had

The discovery of the body.

lasted long enough to betray her feelings in their true colours. She was taken back to prison.

And now I must relate another curious incident connected with this diabolical crime. I have already mentioned that, although much search had been made for the body (which was by this time beyond doubt that of Mr. Hayes), nothing could be traced. But on the very day that Catherine Hayes, Thomas Billings, and Mary Springate were arrested, a gentleman, accompanied by his servant, was crossing Marylebone Fields, then a desolate place, drained by ditches and having many ponds in which the sport of duck-hunting was indulged on Sundays, prize-fighting took place, and where cock-fighting, dog-fighting, bull-baiting, and other fashionable sports of the period were indulged in.

As they neared one of the ditches the servant observed a parcel bound with blanket and tied with string. His curiosity induced him to examine it still further, and he discovered that it contained portions of a human body in an advanced state of decomposition.

Leaving the servant to watch over the remains, the gentleman made his way swiftly to Westminster, and the officers were quickly on the scene. The pond near to where the discovery was made being dragged other parts of the body were found; but although much time was spent, there was no vestige of a head. It at once occurred to the authorities that the remains must be those of Mr. Hayes, and they were conveyed to St. Margaret's Churchyard for examination by the surgeons. News of the discovery was conveyed to the justices whilst Catherine Hayes was before them being examined, but when informed that her husband's body had been found, she still persisted in her innocence.

Notwithstanding this, without further hearing she was conveyed to Newgate to take her trial, it having been determined that this should be done immediately upon the capture of Thomas Wood.

It seems strange that this individual only lived at Harrow-on-the-Hill, yet that appears to have been looked upon then as such a far-off country place that nobody in Westminster knew of the Wood family residing there, and naturally Catherine Hayes and Billings were silent upon the subject. Curious, also, to relate, Wood had heard nothing of the arrest of his accomplices, for there were no "dailies" and "evenings" in the early eighteenth century, and even news as exciting as the capture of the murderers travelled very slowly. So it was some days after the arrests that Mr. Thomas Wood came riding into Westminster, ignorant of what had happened, and reined his horse up at the house of Mrs. Jones, and knocking, desired to see Mrs. Hayes. He was admitted, and detained until the officers made him their prisoner. He was taken before the justices and formally charged, when he was conveyed to prison.

The young man had sadly repented of the share he had taken in the foul crime, and more than once he had been upon the verge of confession; but when he was put into his cell and informed that not only the head had been identified, but that the body in pieces had also been discovered, he begged to be taken before the magistrates once more. This was done, and he thereupon made a full confession of the whole affair. In a very short time Billings was acquainted with what had happened, and finding that the game was up, gave his rendering of the story of the crime. This practically coincided with the version of Wood. Then Mary Springate was released and examined, giving valuable evidence as to what happened on the night preceding the morning upon which the head was discovered in the Thames off Millbank. She also spoke as to the blood being poured down the drainpipe which led through her room to the street from the kitchen belonging to Hayes.

Still this wretched Catherine Hayes persisted in her innocence. In those days it was customary for people awaiting sentence to have pretty well as many visitors as they chose, and even the curious who were not acquainted with the prisoner were admitted without much difficulty. The number of people who went to Newgate to see the woman who was "on show" was enormous, and it is somewhat amusing to read extracts from the conversations which took place. To some she would declare that Mr. Hayes had been a most unkind husband to her. Others she would tell how good he had been. There was always a ready lie upon her lips. One truth she did confess, and that to her shame. She acknowledged Thomas Billings to be her natural son in consequence of her illicit connection with the military officers before her marriage. He was as an infant placed with some people of that name in Worcestershire, and was when he grew up apprenticed to a tailor. It is only fair to Billings, however, to state that he never knew of his relationship to Catherine Hayes. Had he done so, probably the murder would never have been committed.

Events of a startling character followed one after the other in quick succession.

It will be needless for me to dwell upon the details of the trial. My readers know the evidence and incidents which they have picked up during the relation of this crime. They were all three sentenced, Billings and Wood to be hanged, and Catherine Hayes to be burnt at the stake for her crime. It may be mentioned here that the killing of a husband by the wife constituted what was termed petit treason,

and was punishable by death and the burning of the body. But Providence once more stepped in and arranged the final scenes of this extraordinary tragedy. Hayes and Billings were destined to suffer the full penalty of the law, the former, as we shall presently see, being dealt with in a very unexpected manner, and it was certainly ordained by a mightier hand than man's that her last moments upon earth should be of the intensest agony. Hanging was too good for the vile wretch. But of that presently.

On the other hand, Providence took compassion upon the young man Wood—the least guilty and the only penitent one of the three. As he lay in Newgate awaiting his execution, he would see nobody but his poor old mother and the priest, with whom he fervently prayed incessantly. His remorse was genuine, and if ever a soul was saved after

CATHERINE HAYES ON THE WAY TO EXECUTION.

such an act as he had been guilty of it was Thomas Wood's, and he was pitied throughout the country.

As the day drew near which was to see the curtain fall upon this tragedy, the once robust young fellow wasted, and it was seen that the light was gradually burning out—that it needed no executioner to hurry him into eternity.

Hour by hour he sank. With a curious vacant look into the far away he would sit for hours praying silently, until on the eve of the execution his soul passed quietly away. He was found dead in a sitting posture in his cell, with a smile upon his face, as if he had made peace with his conscience. He left a letter for his mother, a copy of which is before me. It is too long to give in its entirety, but I cannot refrain from quoting a few lines:

"My Mother,—This is the last affectionate token thou wilt ever receive from my hand. To-morrow I die. Before thou wilt open this last epistle of thine unfortunate son, these eyes, which overflow with tears of contrition, shall have ceased to weep; and this heart, now fluttering on the verge of eternity, shall beat no more. I have prepared my mind to meet death without horror. Be not discomforted, God will be thy friend. In the solitude of my cell I have sought Him. He has supported me, hath assisted me in my prayers, and many a time in the moment of remorseful anguish hath whispered peace.

"But when, even now that I feel my soul safe in the keeping of my Comforter, I sometimes reflect that my poor remains, the tokens of mortality, must not sleep in peace but be buffeted by the storms of heaven or parched by the summer sun, this cell, this awful gloom—nay, death itself is not so grievous. Why will the laws continue to sport with the wretched after life is at an end? Oh, fool that I was to think friendship could exist without virtue! Had I listened to the advice thou hast so often given me we had been now happy together. . . .

"Adieu, my mother—adieu for ever. Pleasant would death be on the sick bed; but God knows best. The gallows is a fit place for my unworthy body, and I cannot pray to Him for more than He has granted me. May my tears, my penitence, and deep contrition be acceptable to that Almighty Being before whom I am shortly to appear. Once more, farewell.—Your loving son,

"Thomas Wood."

His last prayer was heard. The gallows was not for him.

Thomas Wood's body was allowed to be taken away by his poor widowed mother, and it was buried in the graveyard at Harrow-on-the-Hill. His fearful fate was a deathblow to the old woman, for she was never known to smile again at the little roadside inn where she had once been so happy with her darling son, who had, until his visit to London, been so great a support and comfort to his mother.

Thomas Billings had begged when he was sentenced that he might not be hung in chains after death; but he was informed that the law must take its course. He was duly

executed at Tyburn, and his body was suspended on a gibbet erected in Marylebone Fields, upon the very spot where the remains of the murdered man had been discovered.

And now for Catherine Hayes and the final scene in this fearful tragedy—a tragedy that has no equal in any of the crimes committed in connection with the Thames. I have followed the details of most of them, and will relate several in these pages, and have come to the conclusion that this is the most diabolical with which the "silent highway" has been associated. This infamous woman was to suffer the penalty of the law for petit treason, viz., burning at the stake. Although this was the cruel practice a century and three-quarters ago, the mental torture was greater than the physical, for the executioner's duty was to strangle the condemned before the flames reached the body, which was consumed by burning after death. The last woman executed for husband-murder, or petit treason, was Phœbe Harris, in 1788, although the law continued in force until 1793.

The date fixed for the execution of Catherine Hayes was the 9th of May, 1726; the place at which she was to suffer for her awful and revolting crimes was Tyburn.

Let us in fancy make our way to the spot, where the crowd will be immense, for the shocking details connected with the barbarous murder have raised the indignation of the populace, and thousands will turn out to see the end of the wretched creature.

It is a lovely spring morning, and as we pass up Holborn Hill and out into the country, leaving Tottenham Court Road on our right, the sun shines brightly and the birds are singing merrily. It would seem that all London is taking holiday, and men and women, some on horseback, are dressed in their best. They are evidently in high spirits, for the jokes and chaff—many coarse enough—are frequent, and the laughter and shouting is deafening amongst the gradually increasing stream of people flocking to the west. As we make our way to the Tyburn Road (now Oxford Street), there is a beautiful stretch of country visible on our right, with Hampstead and Highgate in the distance, and the air is laden with the sweet perfume of the hawthorn in full blossom. The vendors of apples and cakes, sheeps' and pigs' trotters, and sweetmeats, are doing a roaring trade, whilst the printed sheets upon the execution of Catherine Hayes, consisting of a set of serio-comic verses, to be sung to the tune of "Chevy Chase," are selling in thousands.

The lines are written in the worst of taste for such an occasion; but then everybody seems light-hearted, and the vein suits them. As we proceed, the crowd becomes denser, and it is difficult to get near the place of execution, where everything is in readiness, so we must squeeze through if we wish to watch the proceedings. That is near enough. See, on the left, there is the gallows, that triangular framework upon uprights; and just a few yards from them, where you see that tall, strong post, is where the woman is to be burnt. See, they are piling up the faggots and blocks of wood around it, and throwing in large pieces of resin. That man on horseback is the sheriff, giving final instructions to the executioner, who stands beside the stake with a heavy chain over his shoulder and a strong rope with a noose to it in his hand. They are making the final arrangements, for the time set for the execution is close at hand. Stand your ground, for the soldiers are clearing the surroundings and making an opening for the procession.

Listen! Now, can you hear a noise like the wind blowing through the forest trees? It becomes more distinct, and swells into a rumbling noise. The doomed woman and her escort are approaching, the voices of the multitude are louder and louder, and the groaning is distinctly heard. Onward they come, and the noise increases until it is hardly possible for us to hold a conversation, it is so great. See the soldiers' heads above the crowd. They are hard pressed by the great concourse of people, and are literally fighting their way through the seething mass of humanity. Now look! There is the wretched woman, standing up in a sort of car without wheels, which is being dragged and jolted over the uneven road. Yes, it is a kind of sledge used for the worst of criminals when slow progress is desired to give the populace an opportunity to display their scorn.

How ghastly she looks! Enough to make her, for the curses and terrible menaces through which she has had to run the gauntlet have at last made an impression upon this hardened, unscrupulous wretch. Observe, as she passes near to us; her lips are livid and quivering and she trembles from head to foot.

Yes, indeed; they get to business very quickly. The priest has done all the praying that is possible, and she has taken little heed. The executioner seems in a hurry to get his gruesome work over; or is he longing to get such a vile creature into his grip?

Observe; he passes the rope through a hole in the stake which pierces it about the woman's height. Now you can see what the heavy chains are for. He is binding her to the stake by winding them around her body. There is no possibility of escape; not even the flames can break them. Now he adjusts the noose about her neck, and the signal is given to fire the faggots.

How silent it is! How hushed is all after the groaning and hooting that has almost deafened us! It seems as if we had entered a huge sepulchre, with the sun piercing the roof of the great blue vault made by the heavens. What a deathlike stillness, now broken by a crackling sound, as wreaths of smoke ascend at different places from the lighted wood surrounding the doomed woman.

Watch the executioner. He tightens the rope around her neck and pulls upon it through the hole in the stake. She is being strangled. Look! Now the flames lick up through the smoke with their little fiery tongues!

What was that—a piercing shriek? See, the breeze blows the smoke away. Good heavens! the executioner has not done his work! The woman's head is free, and the rope hangs loose!

The resin and wood are now well alight—the flames roar, touching her with their thin, lurid lips. Shriek after shriek pierces the sunny air of that lovely May morn. They fly heavenwards—the first and last appeal this wretch has made to Him above—and as she battles with her bare arms and hands that are free, the great flames, with increasing fury, lick around her body, and Catherine Hayes, the fiend who has been guilty of murder and incest, falls a scorched, steaming, hissing heap, and is lost in the devouring element.

THE END.

Divorce for Nothing.

FRANCE is the only country in Europe where a divorce can be obtained for nothing. According to a comparatively recent law, if a couple can satisfy the court that they have valid causes for disagreement, and that there is no reasonable hope of their ever being able to live happily together, they can obtain a decree of divorce without paying a half-penny, provided that they can prove to the judge that they are not sufficiently wealthy to obtain a separation in the ordinary legal manner. In many of the Eastern countries divorce is not a matter for a lawyer at all, but merely a mutual agreement to part. Lack of male issue is sufficient cause for a Mahommedan to divorce his wife without any tedious legal process. The Eskimos also divorce by consent, the man leaving his house for several days, and expecting to find his wife departed when he returns.

Women Executed for High Treason.

NO women have been executed for high treason in England since 1685. In that year Mrs. Alicia Lisle gave shelter to two fugitive rebels after the disastrous battle of Sedgemoor, and was indicted for treason. It was pointed out that as the men had not been charged with treason she could not legally be indicted as their accomplice, but Judge Jeffryes overruled the plea, and directed that she should be found guilty and burnt alive. The residents of Somersetshire appealed to the Crown, and the stake was changed to the axe and block. A few days after Mrs. Lisle suffered, Elizabeth Gaunt was tried for having assisted one Burton, who was concerned in the Rye House Plot, to escape. Burton was dastard enough to appear as the chief witness against the poor woman, who was sentenced to be burnt at the stake, and the inhuman punishment was actually carried out. While she was burning a heavy downpour of rain fell, and the crowd which had assembled to witness this fearful scene interpreted this as a sign of Divine wrath at the brutal punishment.

THE

Great Northern Railway Frauds and Forgeries.

LEOPOLD REDPATH'S CAREER.

"There is gold for you,
Sell me your good report."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Cymbeline," Act II., Sc. 3.

THE career of Leopold Redpath — one of successful swindling, with a high moral reputation, coupled with a really benevolent life—is one of the most extraordinary on record. Money was never obtained with more devilish cunning, or spent with greater generosity. The thief and the philanthropist were so intertwined that the subject of this history forms an exceptional study for the metaphysician.

The early antecedents of Redpath present no features of extraordinary interest. He received a fair education, and displayed good taste in artistic matters; he was well versed on ordinary topics, and possessed a good capacity for business. At one time he was engaged as a lawyer's clerk, at a very poor stipend, it may be assumed, as he lived in dingy lodgings in Cumberland Market. His aspirations with respect to marriage were not exalted, as he paid his addresses to a young woman who was then living as a companion to a lady.

On the starting of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, Redpath obtained a situation as clerk in the offices of that firm. He received a fair salary, but one that was quite inadequate to his growing ambition. Whilst engaged in this place, he gained the confidence of his directors, and obtained, partly through the introduction of one of them, a quantity of furniture to the value of £500, with which he furnished a house in Dartmouth Terrace, one of a substantial and highly respectable row of houses on the high-road from Deptford to Blackheath. He obtained this furniture in anticipation of his marriage to an estimable lady whose name it would be unfair to mention in connection with her criminal husband.

Having secured himself a luxurious home, he left the service of the Peninsular and Oriental Company and started business as an insurance broker in Lime Street, City, and at once began that course of fictitious philanthropy and assumed piety which was so extraordinary a feature in his character. His residence at Blackheath quickly became recognised as that of a gentleman whose name might be relied on as good for a substantial addition to any charitable subscription list. He was extremely moral in his outward character, and affected a respect for religion which he never felt, thereby being looked upon as a moral man. He seemed ambitious to be talked of and regarded as a good-hearted, benevolent, benign gentleman, whose hand, heart, and purse were ever open to the poor and needy. And all this time he was giving away the money that belonged to others. He distributed his creditors' cash with an affable benevolence of demeanour, for his course as an insurance broker was not by any means a long one. Being more generous than he was honest, he became a bankrupt in less than three months, with liabilities to the extent of £5,000, and assets not as many pence. His furniture and effects at Dartmouth House were sold for the benefit of his creditors, and sufficed to pay exactly 2s. 6d. in the pound. The nature of his debts proved that the love of luxury had taken a firm hold on him, as musical instruments, pictures, jewellery, expensive bric-a-brac, etc., were the new joys in which he had indulged.

But Redpath was not the one to be knocked down, like his goods and chattels, by an auctioneer's hammer, and at the age of thirty-five he obtained a position as clerk in the service of the Great Northern Railway Company, his situation at first being quite a subordinate one.

There were formerly two lines of railway connecting London with the north, one of which was called the Direct Northern, and the other the London and York line. The two railways were managed by different boards of directors, and each of them had its own secretary. After some discussion in Parliament, it was deemed advisable to amalgamate the two lines, and the consequence was that one of the secretaries was thrown out of his position. It was, however, thought necessary that another appointment should be created, viz., that of registrar, which was given to a gentleman named Clark, who was previously one of the two secretaries. With regard to this new situation, Redpath acted as subordinate, assisting Mr. Clark in the business of his office.

How soon after being appointed registrar's assistant Redpath entered on his highway of crime, is not known; but it is a fact that he soon resumed that luxurious style of living which seemed to be the height of his ambition. When he first entered the service of the Great Northern Railway, he was living at No. 2, Park Village West, but this soon became too small for his ambitious aspirations, and he took a fine mansion, No. 27, Chester Terrace, for which he paid £400 per annum rent.

In the meantime his principal, Mr. Clark, had resigned his position as registrar, and Redpath was appointed to succeed him in this situation, and he had no sooner secured the post than he plunged headlong into the sea of forgery and fraud. His previous stealings were mere fleabites to those he now effected. Looking back at the frauds of this consummate scoundrel, we can hardly believe that his crimes should have been so easily perpetrated, and should have remained so long undetected. But Leopold Redpath was an accomplished rogue, and the directors were trusting. His facilities for the successful manipulation of fraudulent transactions were very great, and he used them with consummate and devilish skill.

Redpath had devoted his energies to acquiring a complete knowledge of the whole of the affairs of the Great Northern Company, so far as he was able to make them profitable to his own wicked ends. Several kinds of stock had been created, bearing different rates of dividend, and very intricate calculation was required to bring out the respective quotas of dividend and interest to which the various classes of shareholders were entitled; but this artful swindler was well acquainted with all the books of the company from the date of the commencement of these transactions, and he knew all the different shareholders in the concern, the amount of stock they held, and what dividend was payable to each, and it was his duty to place against every name the sum due to its bearer.

The manner in which he committed his extensive forgeries was as follows. It was proved at the trial that he forged and uttered a deed, No. 3623, representing an amount of £312 10s. This deed would have entitled a Mr. John Morris, of Manningtree, to transfer his interest in that stock had he gone with it to a stockbroker. The person purporting to attest was a person named Timothy Shaw, represented by the deed to belong to the same neighbourhood. The transfer was made by Redpath in his own name, and sold through his own stockbroker, and he received the amount represented—£312 10s.

Mr. Henry Atterbury, a clerk in the Great Northern Railway Company, thus explained at the trial the system of fraud referred to: "I produce a transfer, dated May 7, 1852, the number of which is 3623, and it purports to be a transfer from John Morris to William Henry Hammond of £312 10s. of the B stock of the company. In this entry the names of Morris, the transferrer, and that of Timothy Shaw, the attesting witness, are, I believe, in the handwriting of the prisoner Redpath. I also produce the register book, in which there is an entry of the transfer in the prisoner's handwriting, the letters O.B. being annexed to it to denote that it is brought forward from an old book of the company. On examining the old book to trace this entry, I find there is no account whatever in the name of John Morris, as represented in the newer book. The register also contains the following other entries of transfers, viz., No. 4340, B stock, £1,250; 4341, A stock, £3,750; 4342, A stock, £1,625; 4343, B stock, £1,625; and No. 5870, A stock, £1,750. This stock is placed to the credit of Morris, Morris's name being in all the entries

written in the handwriting of Redpath. On the credit side of Morris's account there is £5,500 of A stock, and £4,500 of B stock, making together £10,000." The witness then described other entries in which the names of Morris and the subscribing witness, Shaw, were in Redpath's handwriting; the result of his evidence showing that the sum total of the fraudulent entries on Morris's account alone was £17,600.

Of course no such person as Morris existed, except in the brain of Redpath, and by opening accounts in the books to persons created in his own mind, he had, really, the whole of the stock and the dividends accruing therefrom with which these fictitious persons were credited, and as money was required by him, one of these dummy stockholders would sell some of his interest, and the proceeds would go into the pocket of Redpath. And the dividends, too, instead of being paid by Redpath to these holders, were placed to his own credit. No doubt he had the posting of the dividend warrants, and instead of enclosing them in envelopes and sending them through Her Majesty's mails, he would quietly tear them from the warrant book and retain them himself. The forging of the signatures of the payees was an easy matter, and the cashing of them equally easy, whilst the returned receipts (if any) could be quietly slipped in amongst those genuine ones which had been returned in a legitimate way.

"I shall resign."

But Redpath, being an adept in the art of forgery, had more methods than one. Another mode of robbery was explained in evidence at the trial. In April, 1853, Redpath purchased two separate amounts of stock of £500 and £250 respectively. These were duly transferred to him by the sellers and entered to his credit in the registers. We may explain that when a transfer is made and registered, the buyer receives a certificate, called a coupon, for the amount of stock transferred. This coupon is signed by the transfer clerk; it is then supposed to be compared with the original transfer, and with the entry in the register, by the secretary, who counter-signs it; and it is then delivered to the purchaser of the stock, as his evidence of title. In Redpath's case it was found that he had placed a figure 1 before each of the above-named amounts, thus converting them into £1,500 and £1,250 respectively, thus creating £2,000 of A stock in his own favour. Fifty-two transfers were thus made into his own name and ten out of it. But, though he had falsified the register, the coupon would not agree with it, and as the coupon must accompany the transfer in selling the stock, that, too, must be altered. It may be seen how far the company facilitated by their methods, or, rather, want of methods, this fraud by the fact that the amount the coupon represented was nowhere stated in words on the face of it, nor was the sum even in print, but was filled in with the pen; so that the fraudulent clerk merely had to place a figure 1, or any other number that he was daring enough to venture upon, or that he thought or knew he could successfully "wangle" through the books, before the amount stated in each case, and the forgery was complete. What would be thought of a person who gave a cheque for, say, £1,000, with the amount in figures only, as here written? The addition of a single stroke—1—would mean the stealing of ten thousand pounds, or a slight manipulation would make the 1 into 4, and realise £3,000!

Redpath now saw a perfect goldmine before him, that required but very little labour and comparatively little skill to work; and he did work it accordingly, to a very fine tune. All this time the directors, though they were aware that they were paying dividends which they were quite unable to account for, appeared to be quite unsuspicious of the fact that they were daily being plundered to a large extent. In fact, they were so far deluded that some three years after Redpath had begun his depredations the following letter was positively placed on record:

"Accountant's Department, August 7, 1853.
"To the Chairman and Directors of the Great Northern Railway Company.

"GENTLEMEN,—The accounts and books in every department continue to be so satisfactorily kept, that we have simply to express our entire approval of them, and to present them to you for the information of the shareholders, with our usual certificate of their correctness.—We have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) "J. CATTLEY, "JOHN CHAPMAN } Auditors."

What a suggestive document, viewed by the startling light of Redpath's frauds when they burst upon the astounded shareholders!

The manner in which the thousands of pounds so easily acquired were expended is a very interesting study. Redpath kept no women; he was never known to touch a card; the racecourse had no attractions for him, and the bookmakers never had his name on their lists. He was a highly respectable man—a man of honour and integrity. The world looked on him as a benignant, easy, kind-hearted Christian gentleman, equally distinguished for his riches and refined tastes as he was for his philanthropy. And this character was apparently well deserved, for it cannot be denied that Redpath possessed the tact of the consummate actor. He thoroughly deceived the world, and one can easily believe that he even deceived himself, so far was his life an acted lie. It has been said of him, "Never was a character so well fed and kept in good condition by acts of the most munificent and well-timed liberality, generosity, and charity. Cheat as he was, unscrupulous and profligate adventurer, he lived just as a lawful possessor of all the wealth he stole might have lived and acted, if, in addition to a princely fortune, he had possessed a princely nature. From his hands flowed succour to the orphan, bounty to the struggling patronage to the arts, and aid to every charitable institution. He was munificent in donations to civic feasts, gorgeous under his own roof, sumptuous in hospitality, as free with cheques as other men with compliments. He could outbid an emperor in his own capital, and snatch from his own art exhibition one of its brightest gems. Yet there was nothing gross or sensual in his life. He did not expend the proceeds of his frauds on women, wine and horses, the three constituents of a swindler's paradise. Horses he had, and wine cellars, but they were not main objects with him; he used them as if he used them not; as if he were to the manner born; as if they were but rays of the glorious luminary of his fortune."

This estimate of the man was fully borne out by the facts of Redpath's later career. His house in Chester Terrace was handsomely furnished with everything that a refined taste could suggest and a luxurious ambition could wish for. Here he had his carriage, and kept both groom and coachman. His household arrangements were on a most generous scale—the generosity that spends the money that belongs to others. A butler had charge of his cellar of selected

wines; a footman attended to his most trifling wants; and half-a-dozen female servants added to the comforts of his home life. Parties were, of course, of frequent occurrence in a home of this character. Redpath's dinners were faultless, his wines the finest brands that money could buy. No expense was spared to supply the table with the choicest delicacies. What if peas were one shilling or one guinea a quart—it was quite a matter of indifference to him. Nor did he care if strawberries were two shillings or two pounds a punnet, asparagus a florin or a fiver a bundle, or pine-apples four shillings or forty—he had anything and everything that Covent Garden Market could supply in the way of scarce and expensive fruits, flowers, and vegetables, and everything else was the same in connection with the house. Redpath himself was, naturally, the presiding genius of these convivial gatherings—the easy, urbane host, and the benign, polite gentleman. There was nothing fast or coarse in all this; good taste ruled over it all, and there was but one element lacking—honesty—to make his manner of living perfectly legitimate.

In dress and personal appearance Redpath was controlled by the same good taste, but not unmixed with vanity. Every morning he had his hair dressed by a perruquier from Strathearn's, in Princes Street, Hanover Square, the head of the firm or an assistant driving up to Chester Terrace in a cab, which was kept waiting at the door whilst the tonsorial artist was arranging and perfuming Redpath's somewhat scanty locks.

The pleasures of the table and of refined company were not the only ones in which Redpath indulged. Charity was, with him, an amusement, a hobby, and a source of patronage which secured for him flattery and fair friends. Energetic secretaries found in him a gentleman who was ever ready to put his name on any list for a new church, a fancy bazaar for a school, or a fund for the benefit of a widow or orphan. He was a governor and one of the managing committee of Christ's Hospital, and also a governor of the St. Ann's Society, an institution for the children of those who had at one time been prosperous. He was also an auditor of the accounts, and on the principle that one must "set a thief to catch a thief," there would be very little fear of the funds of that institution being misappropriated by an embryo Redpath. There was, no doubt, a great deal of ostentation in this, for one cannot believe that a man who was engaged daily in cunningly forging transfer deeds for the sake of money, could be always prompted by the magnanimous feeling of true charity. His kindness of heart was fictitious, his charity spurious, a hollow mockery of generosity, and yet it is difficult to believe that the genuine warmth of true benevolence did not sometimes prompt his actions, for he has been known to seek out some poor widow who was trying to get her boy into a school, condole with her struggles, and generously relieve her necessities in so kind a manner as to make the poor woman's heart leap for joy.

The directors of the Great Northern Railway Company were quite unsuspicious of the real sources of Redpath's wealth. He had the reputation of being a successful speculator, and the salary they paid him was merely regarded by them as a minor source of income. It might be thought that the extravagance on which he eventually entered would have aroused suspicion in the minds of his friends—but it was not so. Even when he purchased a splendid house at Weybridge, with park and pleasure grounds, their faith remained unshaken Still, there were a few amongst his

REDPATH WAS FOUND SITTING AT BREAKFAST.

acquaintances who were somewhat startled at this fresh display of wealth, but it was all credited to further successes on the Stock Exchange. It may be mentioned that the directors of the company never knew the extent of his extravagance until too late. The dozen servants employed at this country seat, the fisherman with his punt for Mr. Redpath's angling excursions, the valet who accompanied him on his travels, the cook with £30 a year, were all accounted for by those who derived pleasure from them by supposed success in illusory undertakings.

But the sword was to fall at last. An incident occurred which suddenly startled the directors into a knowledge of the extravagance of Redpath. Mr. Denison, the chairman of the company, was standing on the platform of a railway station conversing with Lord D——, when Redpath chanced to pass by, and lifted his hat to Mr. Denison. The nobleman, however, walked quickly forward, and taking Redpath by the hand, "Ah, my dear fellow," said he, "how are you?" After chatting a few minutes, Lord D—— returned to Mr. Denison, who immediately asked him what he knew of their clerk. "Oh," replied he, "he is the jolliest fellow in life; he gives the most sumptuous dinners and capital balls that I

know of." This was an ominous meeting for Redpath, for it appears that the crimes of another forger had led directors of public concerns to fear that some such man might be in their employ and helping himself to the money of the company.

The directors of the Great Northern Railway Company had, for some time, been paying dividends on a much larger sum than they could well account for, but they relied on the trustworthy character of their clerks, and on none more than that of Redpath. After the meeting on the platform above mentioned, Mr. Denison mentioned the matter to his co-directors, and it was determined to thoroughly examine the company's books. This once decided, it was considered advisable to begin the investigation from an early date, and a separate department was created for the purpose.

The officials deputed to carry this matter out first met on November 15, 1856, and a day or two after, when the actual inquiry was beginning, Redpath entered the room and asked what they were going to do. "To go through all the accounts," answered the head of the department, "from the commencement of the company."

"That is perfectly useless," said the thunder-stricken Redpath. "You will find all the accounts right in the gross, and it is of no use entering into special details."

Seeing that this feeble protest was unavailing, and being, of course, afraid to urge the matter, Redpath took up a book, turned over a few leaves carelessly, and then shutting it with a bang, remarked, "Well, if that is your intention, I will have nothing to do with it; and if this course is persevered in I shall resign." He made an excuse to leave for a few minutes, but never returned.

He now clearly saw that the game was up, and determined to make his escape. He sent one of the ticket porters of the company to the Union Bank in Argyll Place, Regent Street, for the title deeds of his house in Chester Terrace, and for other securities which were lodged there for safety, instructing the messenger to meet him at Chester Terrace with the documents. The porter misunderstood him, and took them to the railway offices, but could not find Redpath there. The company's officials intercepted them, and at once learned that their clerk contemplated flight; so they gave notice to the Union Bank that any balance standing to the credit of Redpath was to be withheld till proper inquiries could be instituted.

The accounts, in the meantime, were being examined, and the terrible truth gradually unfolded itself; thousand after thousand was found to have been forged by this greedy and luxurious plotter, and the police were at once informed of the matter, while possession was taken of the Chester Terrace house and the mansion and park at Weybridge.

Mrs. Redpath was sitting at home, surrounded by all the refinements of her beautiful home, expecting her husband's return; a detective suddenly made his appearance with the news that Redpath was a forger and a thief. This was too much for her, and she swooned, only to be restored to a far more painful sense of her misery.

Whilst these things were happening, Redpath had hurried off to Paris; but for some reason or other, he determined to give himself up, and he sent a telegraphic message to say he would return. Superintendent Williams had gone to Paris after the fugitive, armed with a warrant for Redpath's apprehension; but a telegram from the secretary of the company brought him back, and at the house which had been mentioned in the fugitive's telegram, No. 4, Ulster Place, New Road, Redpath was found sitting at breakfast, and was at once given into custody. He was taken to Clerkenwell Police Office in a cab, and on his way expressed to Williams, whom he had known as an officer in the company, his regret at being so situated, and added, "There's my place in Chester Terrace, and if they sell it well, it will fetch at least £30,000."

He then asked that Mr. Wontner, his solicitor, should be sent for, and this was done. On the following day he was placed before Mr. Tyrwhitt. The police court examinations were somewhat protracted, but on the 24th of December, 1856, he was fully committed for trial.

On Thursday, January 15, 1857, Redpath and a man named Charles James Comyns Kent, who had acted as a clerk under Redpath, were arraigned. Kent was indicted for conspiring to defraud the Great Northern Railway Company, in conjunction with Redpath. The judges who tried the case were Mr. Baron Martin and Mr. Justice Wills. The counsel for the prosecution were Mr. Serjeant Ballantine, Mr. Bodkin, and Mr. Giffard; Mr. Serjeant Parry and Mr. Tindal Atkinson defended Redpath, and Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Thompson appeared for Kent.

After considerable evidence and a lot of testimony to the good character of Kent, he was acquitted.

Mr. Justice Willes, in summing up, clearly analysed the circumstances of the particular indictment on which Redpath had been tried, viz., the forging of a transfer of the Great Northern Railway Company's stock, and said that the question for the jury was, whether that instrument was a real or a fictitious transfer, and whether it had been executed by the prisoner for the purpose of fraud. The jury saw this, and after a few minutes' deliberation, and without leaving the box, returned a verdict of guilty.

In the course of the trial, Mr. T. Atkinson said that between £40,000 and £50,000 worth of property had been realised from Redpath's estate. It was a larger sum than was involved in the defalcations which he had been guilty of.

It was fully expected that Redpath would receive a heavy sentence, and Mr. Justice Willes, in passing it, spoke feelingly of the way in which Redpath had involved others in irregularities which might have been construed into crime. "I must say," continued the learned judge, "that I regard that as a very base proceeding on your part, and if it were possible to aggravate your crime, I think that that aggravated it very much. Looking, however, only to the facts in this case, and upon the depositions, it appears that you have forged no less than twenty deeds. You have obtained, by means of these forged deeds, between £20,000 and £40,000, how much more one may imagine from the statement which has been made on your behalf. You are therefore a person who has forged on a large scale; you have played for heavy stakes, and you must have been aware all along that if your iniquities were discovered you would be called to a heavy account. That account it is my duty now to close by pronouncing upon you the sentence of the court, which is that you be transported beyond the seas for the term of your natural life." Thus ended the career of one of the most extraordinary villains in the annals of crime.

He Used Both Hands.

LORD CHANCELLOR ELLESMERE, when he had perused a petition of which he did not approve, would say to the petitioners:

"What! would you have my hand to this now?"

Those presenting the petition of course answered, "Yes, my lord."

"Well, you shall; nay, you shall have both my hands to it." And so saying he tore it in pieces with both hands.

He Wanted a Commission.

A YOUNG barrister who had been just called to the bar, and was, therefore, not perfectly familiar with the contractions or abbreviations used by solicitors in legal documents, was handed a brief endorsed: "Regina v. Sykes. Instructions to move for a common to examine witnesses." The young lawyer, with great confidence, humbly moved their lordships for a *common* to examine witnesses.

"A what, sir?" asked the Chief Justice.

"I humbly move for a common to examine witnesses."

"Pray, sir, are the witnesses numerous?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Then take Wimbledon Common!" was the answer of the learned judge.

The young barrister was not aware that the word "common" written on his brief was but a contraction of the word "commission," and that what was required was a commission to examine witnesses; hence the Chief Justice took the opportunity of making a good joke of it.

An Apt Apologue.

SERJEANT SHEE was once engaged in a case in which great credulity and knavery were clearly apparent, and in his address to the jury explained the case by the following apologue: "An Eastern sovereign was waited on by some merchants, who exhibited for sale several very fine Arabian horses. The potentate admired and purchased them, and, in addition, gave the merchants instructions to buy more of the same kind of cattle and bring them to him, at the same time giving them a lac of rupees wherewith to make the purchases. Soon afterwards the monarch in a jocose way ordered his vizier to make out a list of all the fools in his dominions. He did so, and put the king's name at the top. His Majesty asked why he had done so, and the vizier replied:

"Because you entrusted a lac of rupees to men you did not know, and who will never come back again."

"Yes," said the king; "but suppose they should come back again?"

"Then," replied the vizier, "I shall take out your Majesty's name and insert *theirs*."

The Assassination of De la Rue, at Hampstead.

COLD-BLOODED MURDER COMMITTED BY THE COOL-HANDED HOCKER.

"Fear the boisterous savage of passions less than the sedately grinning villain."
—LAVATER.

PART 1.

ALTHOUGH it is many a long year since I have written a line of shorthand as a reporter or attended professionally at a coroner's inquest, police court, or criminal court, I have not entirely lost interest in the proceedings at either. Use is second nature, it is said, so, as I had over 60 years' experience as a reporter on the press, I may be excused for occasionally being present, even at my age, at some of the present-day trials. So I spent the few days which heralded in the spring of the present year at the Old Bailey, and heard once more the words from the judge—words that I had heard scores of times before—"I have only to pass on you the sentence of death . . . and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul!" Of course, my readers will at once know that I am alluding to the trial of that remarkable villain Severino Klosowski, the Polish hairdresser and arch-poisoner, who was sentenced at the Old Bailey on March 20 last, and hanged at Wandsworth Prison. What a story of crime this case will make for our journal one of these days! My readers will also wonder what on earth "George Chapman" had to do with Mr. Thomas Henry Hocker, who was sentenced at the very same place just 58 years ago.

Nothing whatever. Only that my visit to the Old Bailey in March last brought the trial of the murderer Thomas Hocker so vividly to my mind that I determined to write it as one of my reminiscences. I could not help thinking of the last-named when I heard sentence passed upon Chapman—the contrast was so great. The wretched alien, as all my readers know, entirely collapsed. Our present-day reporters told graphically how the impassiveness that he resolutely assumed on the day when the hearing commenced gradually gave way; how the miserable Polish dog bent in his chair inch by inch, so that at last his head was below the dock; how his body shook with a peculiar tremor, and his black brows were contracted in a nervous frown, as though trying to suppress a great emotion. Those who were not present will have read how when he re-appeared to hear that he was to be hanged he sank half fainting on the top step of the dock. How when brought forward to be officially informed of this fact he entirely collapsed, and, until a warder raised him up, sobbed bitterly with his head against the panelling of the dock. How, after sentence was passed, and the chaplain beside the judge solemnly uttered the word "Amen!" the condemned man suddenly ceased to weep and, looking ghastly in the flickering light, was turned round by one warder, whilst another started him towards the stairs and half slid him over the wooden floor, worn smooth by the criminals who had passed before him.

As I watched all this in the Old Bailey last March I could not help thinking of the exit of Thomas Henry Hocker. The scene was precisely the same. It was crowded with silent, expectant humanity. Spectators were squeezed into the same narrow passages—morbidly-curious listeners—the alleyway behind counsels' table was choked with young barristers; there was the same line of aldermen, with sheriffs and under-sheriffs, the chaplain and the coroner; the judge, in his scarlet robes; and the same peculiar, stuffy atmosphere which belongs only to the Old Bailey. Indeed, the doors might have been thrown open upon the same scene of over half a century ago, save the two playing the leading parts, Coleridge as the judge, and Hocker as the man condemned. Never shall I forget the coolness of this man. After a long speech for his final defence (from which I shall in due course give extracts), with a voice firm and unemotional, he left the court with a cheerful look and elastic step as he lightly tripped down the stairs. I again repeat, never was there so great a contrast in the demeanour of two criminals, and it was on account of that very fact that all the details of the old trial came back to my mind.

But I am not only digressing, I am beginning at the end, which is, in my humble opinion, a bad form of either ancient or modern journalism. So will you kindly go back with me in fancy to the February of 1845, instead of to the March of 1893.

It so happened in that very year I was residing at Hampstead, then looked upon as a place quite in the country, and approachable by the yellow omnibuses that used to finish their journey in Hungerford Market, now covered by the Charing Cross railway station. It was, as now, a delightful suburb of London, and, after being cooped up in the courts for many hours, as I was at that time, the ride outside the four-horsed 'bus along the Hampstead Road, up Haverstock Hill (then, by the bye, all known as the Hampstead Road), and into the quaint little town, always so fresh with the breeze from the delightful heath, was a pleasure indeed.

Although Hampstead itself is little altered, the approaches to it are very much transformed, especially on the left as you ascend the steep hill. Where now are modern houses joining the main road to the Finchley Road and Swiss Cottage, were all fields and lanes, with lovers' walks, and a magnificent park, and one of the finest avenues of elm trees in England. The two latter are now streets and terraces, known as Belsize.

Belsize Park and Avenue were always favourite places for pleasure-seekers, and Belsize House, which once stood in the park, must have been, a century before the time of which I am writing, rather a fast-going place, for I have before me a little book, published in 1722, entitled, "Belsize House: a satire, exposing Fops and Beaux who there frequented; Characters of Women who made it an immoral place of meeting, and exposing the 'Nice Goings On' in the several Apartments." Rather an attractive title, eh? But the contents are not quite so bad as the title would suggest. Here is an extract:

"This house, which is a nuisance to the land,
Doth near a park and handsome garden stand,
Fronting the road, betwixt a range of trees,
Which is perfumed with a Hampstead breeze;
And on each side the gate's a grenadier.
Howe'er, they cannot speak, think, see, or hear;
But why they're posted there no mortal knows,
Unless it be to fright jackdaws and crows;
For rooks they cannot scare, who there resort,
To make of most unthoughtful bubbles sport."

By all accounts Belsize House must have harboured dissipation and lewdness to a degree, and it is a curious fact that if once a place or district gets besmeared, it takes years of cleansing. Take for instance the Haymarket, St. John's Wood, and many other places I could mention—how many years did they take to cleanse? So it was with Belsize, as we shall see as my story develops, for not only was the murder I shall describe committed there, but it was the rendezvous of the victim and his mistress (a remnant of Belsize House of old), which meetings undoubtedly led to the motive of the crime.

It was, I recollect, one Saturday afternoon, towards the end of April, in 1845, that I had left some jovial "pals" at the old Cheshire Cheese in Fleet Street, where we had been regaling ourselves, as was our custom in those days, with some of their celebrated steak, kidney and oyster pudding, and smoked a pipe upstairs over a glass or two of hot

punch, for it was bitterly cold. I had left the merry party of journalists rather earlier than usual, and had made my way to Hungerford Market and taken my seat beside the driver, for I never dreamed of going inside then, sunshine or rain. It was a nasty, slippery road as we made our way north, but we had a capital "whip," and the four horses had been rough shod, so we made time as usual.

I think it must have been about a quarter to seven o'clock as we passed down High Street, Camden Town, for I know, it being Saturday night, the road was lined with costers' barrows, with their naphtha lamps blazing away; and it was very dark as we passed Chalk Farm Road, where we changed horses, and had time for just a nip at the Adelaide, for it was, as I have said, bitterly cold, the temperature falling the farther we got north. Anyhow (as I ascertained afterwards) it was exactly a quarter-past seven when our 'bus was abreast of Belsize Lane, the turning past the Avenue.

I saw at once that there was something unusual the matter, for at the corner of the lane were several people standing, and as we pulled up a couple of policemen turned the corner and at top speed ran in the direction of Hampstead. I was off the box-seat in a jiffy, and the 'bus went on. My question as to what was the matter elicited a confused reply that somebody had committed suicide down the lane, they believed, and the "bobbies" had gone for the stretcher. I thought to myself, "Halloa! here's 'copy'!" but little did I think at the moment that I had landed thus unexpectedly upon a nest of "copy" that was destined to keep me going for weeks.

The other fellows seemed afraid to go down the dark lane, but I was used to that sort of thing, and had no more dread of looking at a corpse, mutilated, bloody, or decomposed, than I had of gazing upon a rosetree in full bloom. I knew every inch of the ground, so there was no fear of losing my way, dark as it was. Belsize Lane, I may mention, connected the Hampstead Road, as it was then called, with the Finchley Road, and about half-way down was a narrow turning to the left which led direct to Primrose Hill. I had just got to this, and was hesitating which way I should go, when—let me confess it—I was startled—a good deal startled—by the appearance of a man in a long black coat. Quickly recovering myself, however, I addressed him, asking if he had heard of the tragic affair.

"Oh, yes," he said; "I have just come away from the body. There is a policeman and another fellow there. You'll find them along the lane, on the right. They've sent for the stretcher. Good night."

I pushed on and soon saw a light. It was the constable's bull's-eye, and I made direct for it. I knew every man in the Hampstead division, of course, and this one became very communicative. His name was Jem Baldock, I remember. He told me that some half-hour or so previously Mr. Hilton, a master baker, well known about there, had been serving some of his customers in Haverstock Terrace when he heard repeated cries of "Murder," which appeared to proceed from the lane.

"Hilton found me," said Baldock, "and I at once sprung my rattle"—the police had no whistles in those days—"and one of my mates came, and this is what we found. He left me here alone and went for assistance. No, you're right, sir; not a nice job to be left in such company in such a place. But what startled me most, sir, was a chap who came on the scene like a happarition—a fellow with a long black cloak, who sprung up as if he had jumped from behind the trees there. My eye! he did give me a turn, I can tell you!"

This, I was confident, must have been the very man who had startled me. I asked the constable to describe him. This he did, and I was then convinced.

"I believe he was a doctor, or something of that sort," said Baldock, "for he knelt down whilst I held the lantern, and felt his pulse, and said, 'Yes, he's quite dead, constable. There's been some foul play here, I should think.' Then he pulled a flask of brandy out and asked me to take a pull, but I told him as how it was against the regulations. He then offered me a shilling, which I also refused, at first, but he pressed me so hard that I at last took it, and he wished me good night and made off. Rum, wasn't it,

"THERE HAS BEEN FOUL PLAY HERE!"

"GET UP AND DRESS!"

governor? Oh, yes, I should know him again amongst a thousand. Had the bull's-eye full on his face when he was kneeling down by the body."

By this time the constables and others had returned and, lifting the body on the stretcher, and making a careful search, they found a hat, a stick, and a button. What an important part that latter trifle played in the tragedy we shall in due course discover.

It was a mournful procession as we slowly marched through the dark lane, with only the lights from the policemen's lanterns dancing on the boughs and twigs of the trees, which added but to the weirdness as their shadows were cast in spectre-like form upon the frozen ground.

The body was taken to the Yorkshire Grey public-house, in Hampstead, and Inspector Gray, of East Street police-station, and the surgeon, Mr. R. R. Perry, were there. The latter made a superficial examination of the body and found the head badly battered. The police-officer, of course, searched the clothes, and the first dash of romance in the trying tragedy was revealed in a letter found in the deceased's pocket, and of which I subsequently made a copy. Here it is:

"My dearest James,—I find myself in a situation which makes it necessary for me to leave home shortly. I would rather die than doubt either your word or your honour; yet do not, oh! do not be ashamed to own me! If you cannot at present give me the title of wife, conceal me from the cruel finger of scorn. Heaven has been my witness that I have loved you but too dearly. Let me be happy in the conviction that you will one day restore me to your arms for ever. Ease my suspense by meeting me to-morrow at the place where, alas! you have always made me happy; yet not so, if it will put one smile of hope and comfort on my countenance. You can render me for ever light-hearted and happy, or for ever heart-broken and conscience-stricken. Oh, that a bended knee might procure me the former lot!—Ever yours,

"Caroline."

The opening of the inquest was fixed for the Monday, and in the meanwhile the sleuth-hounds were on the track. Never shall I forget the excitement that the murder created in Hampstead and the north of London on the Sunday! an excitement which, day after day, gathered in intensity and spread all over London and the provinces. I have just turned up a letter from a young lady which I received at the time, and will quote from it to show that not only the vulgar, with their morbid curiosity, discussed the affair, but it was the talk of all.

This charming damsel writes:

"I congratulate myself on not being in Church Road during the delightful excitement of this murder and the inquest, which appear to have had so many charms for the million. . . 'But I think the event will give me a kind of dislike to Belsize Lane, which, hitherto, I used to think the pleasantest way from us to you."

As a matter of fact, that beautiful avenue and its surrounding lanes were shunned by most people afterwards; but at the time there was the wildest excitement. I never saw such curiosity exhibited over a murder. Immense numbers of people visited the field. Carriage ladies drove down the lane, and gentlemen on horseback, accompanied by their grooms, were there. Not content with looking at the spot where the man was done to death, many brought away boughs and twigs from the surrounding trees, chips from the fence against which the man fell when he was struck, preserving most carefully that which had blood upon the wood. Thank goodness, such feelings are now somewhat modified, and I trust that people will not give way to such morbid curiosity again, for we do not wish a repetition of that which took place when Weare was murdered by Thurtell. The water in which the body was found was on that occasion palpably diminished by the bottlesful which had been carried away to be stored in the museums of private collectors. Our great novelist declared that "the landlord upon whose premises a murder has been committed is nowadays a made man. The place becomes a show in the neighbourhood, as the scene of a fair. The barn in which Maria Martin was murdered by Corder was sold for toothpicks; the hedge through which Mr. Weare was dragged was purchased by the inch. Bishop's house bids fair to go off in tobacco-stoppers, and the well will be drained at a guinea a quart. Really, if people indulge in this horrid taste, they will tempt landlords to get murders committed in their houses for the great profit accruing from the morbid curiosity."

Certainly the curiosity and excitement was tremendous over this Hampstead tragedy; and when I tell you that at the inquest—inquest, mark you, not the trial—amongst those present at the Yorkshire Grey public-house were Lord Alfred Paget, Lord William Lennox, and Mr. Prothero, M.P., little wonder will be felt at the excitement amongst the crowd.

The opening of the inquest on the Monday revealed the fact that the man murdered was a Mr. James De la Rue. His brother Daniel was there to identify him. The deceased was said to be a professor of music residing at Whittlebury Street, Euston Road, and was thirty-three years of age. He was not married, and his brother (who, by the bye, was a compositor, living at the Albion Coffee House, Marylebone Road) saw him alive on Friday, February 16. He told the coroner that his brother James had a very excellent connection and taught the piano to many persons in Hampstead and neighbourhood, and that frequently he carried much money and always a gold watch. So much having been elicited, the coroner excluded the public, closed the doors, and

On a charge of life or death.

had a conference with the police-officers, and the inquest was adjourned until the following Thursday.

Meanwhile the detectives had not been idle. Messrs. Shackell and Hayes, who had the matter in hand, soon picked up a clue, and I was one of the first to learn that arrests were made. They had been to deceased's house, and there discovered a quantity of obscene photographs and books, which did not point to the high moral character of Mr. James De la Rue, the gentle ladies' music-master. But they found other documents as well, which put them on the scent and enabled them to trace his movements on the day before the murder.

They discovered that he was in company with a young woman with whom he was acquainted (no other than Caroline, it was surmised, to whom I have already called attention) on the Friday evening before the murder. They were seen together, so the detectives were informed, at 7 o'clock, near the Swiss Cottage, and she was seen to leave him, going towards Regent's Park. Here they broke down, for they were unable to find Caroline, and it was impossible to discover whether she had met him on the Saturday. They had, however, already, whilst examining the spot where the murder was committed, traced blood upon the second rail of the style near where the body was found. It was, on close examination, found to be the marks of the fingers of a man's left hand. When De la Rue's body was found he wore a glove upon the left hand.

And here I may call attention to the fact that the murdered man was of French extraction, and, curiously enough, it was through the investigations of his countryman M. Bertillon that the finger impressions are now taken as the finest evidence of identity possible. How valuable would that have been in this case had it been known.

Messrs. Shackell and Hayes had, as I have stated, found a clue at the lodgings of the murdered man which induced them to pay a visit to No. 17, Charles Street, Portland Town. This was the residence of a Mr. Hocker, senior, a respectable old gentleman, with two sons, James and Thomas Henry. The young men had their rooms in the house, but also had lodgings elsewhere, however, at 11, Victoria Terrace, Portland Town, quite close to the paternal residence. From the father they learned that his son Thomas had been very well off for money during the past few days, also that he told him how he had borrowed £20 from a party named Edwards, who lived in Holborn. Thomas had paid his parents several pounds owing, and he had been entertaining his friends most liberally. This was all the detectives desired to know in that quarter, and the information given them by the Bros. Hocker's parents, given so candidly and unexpectedly, they immediately acted upon. Little did they suspect what was to happen at their next interview with the officers. It is a scene which I never desire to witness again, and baffles my pen to describe.

I may mention that in those days it was much less difficult for a press man, when well known, to get into the confidence of detectives than it is at the present time, and I had exceptional privileges. It was hinted to me that an arrest was to be made in the De la Rue murder case, and, as I was professionally very much interested in the affair, I contrived to accompany the officers upon their mission.

We made our way, three of us, to a quiet little house in Victoria Terrace, Portland Town, and one in advance knocked at the door, which was immediately opened, and we at once pushed our way in.

"Mr. Thomas and James Hocker reside here, do they not?" said our chief. "I know they are within, and we desire to see them at once on most important business."

Without awaiting an answer, up the stairs we went, and, with a loud rap at a door on the second floor, for this room had been located, we entered. There in bed were two men, one with very marked features, which, once seen, could never be forgotten.

"I arrest you both on suspicion of being concerned in the murder of James De la Rue," quietly said our chief, and, before I was aware of it, three or four other detectives stood in the doorway.

"Get up and dress," said our chief to the men, who were now prisoners. "And you, sergeant, search the room."

The confusion—the one look from the eyes of Thomas Hocker—spoke volumes. The astonishment and fear depicted upon the other face was an index of surprise, and I felt intuitively that at least this one man knew nothing about the matter.

Thomas at once regained his composure, and said, "There is nothing to be alarmed at, James. We must go without making a scene." He then quietly proceeded to dress himself.

In the meanwhile the police were busy searching the cupboard and a box. The prisoners were handcuffed, taken downstairs, put into a cab which awaited, and quietly driven off to Marylebone police-station.

From amongst the articles in their room our chief selected a pair of trousers stained with blood, and covered with dirt, a pair of stockings, also bloody, a mackintosh, with the front and back splashed with blood, and a few other articles. With a look of grim satisfaction, he made these up into a parcel and handed them to his subordinate. Then turning to me asked if I should like to witness the finish of the evening's entertainment, as he was now going back to the elder Mr. Hocker's house.

Of course I readily agreed. The old man was just retiring to rest for the night, little dreaming of the dreadful shock that was in store for him. But the meting out of justice has no consideration for feelings, and a detective's heart may have a soft place in it, but not when duty calls.

We were welcomed into their parlour. One by one, the garments were placed upon the table, and, with pallid faces and astonished looks, the old couple recognised each as the property of their son Thomas. Then, as gently as could be done, the old people were apprised of their sons' arrest.

"My God!" shrieked the old man, "not for murder! Don't tell me for murder! Yes, yes, I see it is blood! blood upon my boy's clothes—but not upon his hands! No, no! God forbid! Thomas will clear himself of this, I know!—I'm sure he will!" And the old fellow sank trembling into a chair, with his face in his hands, saving himself from going into a dead faint by bursting into a torrent of tears. It was a fearful scene.

Next morning the brothers appeared before Mr. Rawlinson, at the Marylebone Police Court. I can see Thomas Henry Hocker's face and form before me now, as if it were but yesterday, as he stood in the dock on a charge of life or death.

He was dressed in a brown frock-coat, with velvet collar, black waistcoat and trousers, and black satin stock. But the face! What a remarkable face! The like I had never seen before, nor have I since.

Subtleness and fixedness of purpose in his general aspect, his features were remarkable. His eyes deeply embedded in his face, nose and mouth of unusually large dimensions. Narrow, retiring forehead, a long face, and flat cheeks. His head, remarkably thin towards the back part, surmounted by an ample crop of long brown hair, which looked as if it never had been disturbed by brush or comb The conformation of the head altogether would have formed a fine study for a phrenologist. The existence of the animal propensities was strongly indicated.

Such was the outward appearance of the man who was charged with the murder of James De la Rue. Not the less remarkable were the characteristics of the man's mind and his wonderful brain power. Like Charles Peace, like the man who was recently executed at Wandsworth for the murder of the Darbys, and like a few other notorious criminals whom I have met, he had enormous imaginative brain-power—but how misapplied! And as we peruse our story of this crime the extraordinary self-possession, ability, and marvellous ingenuity of this young man (only 22 years of age) will become apparent.

The Marylebone police court was crowded to suffocation, everybody expecting to learn something startling, but, after the charge of murder was preferred against Thomas Henry Hocker, he was remanded, and his brother James discharged by Mr. Rawlinson, the magistrate.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

He Found a Substitute.

SERJEANT WHITAKER was once on circuit, and a friend at one of the assize towns offered him sleeping accommodation. The next morning the lady of the house asked him how he had slept, and hoped he had been quite comfortable and warm.

"Yes, madam," answered the serjeant, "yes; pretty well on the whole. At first, to be sure, I felt a little queer for want of Mrs. Whitaker, but remembering that my portmanteau lay in the room, I threw it behind my back, and it did every bit as well."

What He Couldn't Do.

MR. TAYLOR, the celebrated oculist, was once invited to dine with the barristers of the Oxford Circuit, and in the course of the evening he boasted of the wonderful things he had done in his profession. At length Mr. Bearcroft, one of the leaders of the Circuit, grew quite tired with so much self-conceit, and said:

"Pray, Chevalier, as you have told us of a great many things which you have done and can do, will you be so good as to try to tell us anything which you cannot do?"

"Nothing easier!" replied Taylor. "I cannot, for instance, be so indecent as to pay my share of this excellent dinner bill, and that, sir, I must ask you kindly to do for me."

The Student's Ruse.

WHEN Lord Treasurer Burghley was a student at Gray's Inn, in 1542, at the age of nineteen, he was induced by a companion to play cards, and thereby lost all his money, bedding, books, etc., having never played cards before. The following day he told some of his fellow-students how he had been misled by so-and-so, and said he would soon be even with him. And he kept his word. With a long tube he made a hole in the wall near his gambling companion's bed-head, and in a fearful voice, and at midnight, spoke through the tube as follows:

"Oh, mortal man, repent! Repent of thy horrible time consumed in play, cozenage, and such lewdness as thou hast committed, or else thou art damned and canst not be saved!"

The young gambler was so terrified that the sweat poured down his face, and he could scarce keep from screaming out. Most penitent and sorrowful, the following day he related tremblingly what a fearful voice had spoken to him at midnight, and he vowed never to play cards again. Calling for Mr. Burghley, he begged his forgiveness on his knees, and restored all his money, bedding, books, etc.

Both gamblers were reclaimed by this device, and neither of them ever touched a card again.

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

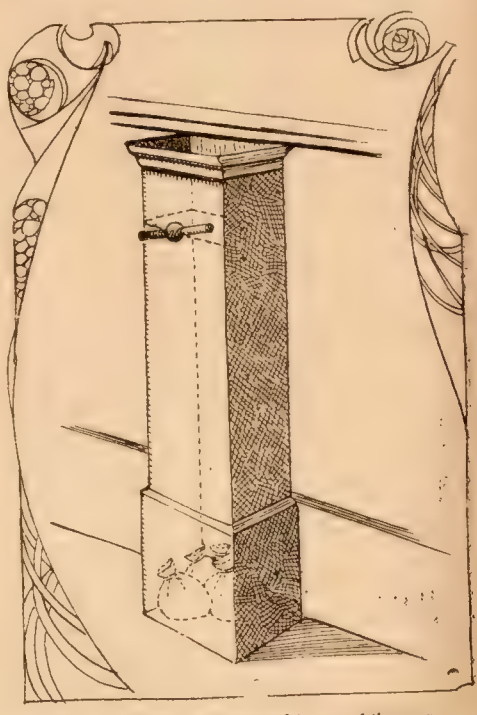
XXI.—HOW CRIMINALS HIDE THEIR PLUNDER.

RAT-TAT-ATAT! A thunderous knocking at the mean door of a small house in a mean street. For a moment the two men who clamoured so loudly for admittance waited. No sound came from inside the house, so with a push of his shoulder one of the pair burst open the door and made for the stairs. In a back room which he quickly entered a small, alert man stood waiting. He had looked out of the window, and had seen a burly policeman waiting in the dingy bit of ground labelled garden, but which grew nothing more beautiful than empty cans and heaps of rubbish. Not even the green of a weed served to brighten the desolation. The man in the garden and the detective (for such he was) on the stairs accounted for the little man's inactivity. No use trying to escape when the odds are against one. It only means bruises as well as capture. Hence the quiet submission. The detective places the thief under arrest. The latter grins for a moment as the officer proceeds to search the room. A jeweller's shop has been rifled, and so hot have the police

An unexpected shower of jewels.

been upon the track of the thief that they feel certain the stolen property has not yet been disposed of. The robbery was discovered on the previous morning, and the man under arrest has been under close observation ever since.

Here and there the detective probes. The second man comes up to help him, whilst the thief sits silent. One of the detectives goes to an upper room. Those below can hear his heavy footsteps as he "tries" the floors for a loose board. At last he is directly overhead. His boots pound on the well worn dirty planks. From the ceiling of the room in which the thief and his captor are waiting a few bits of plaster fall



How a ventilating shaft was used to conceal the swag.

with a gentle rustle. "Steady, old man," cries the first detective, "you'll have the ceiling down." The warning is given too late. With a rush and a clatter a big segment of the plaster gives way and falls to the floor. There is only a little dust, and through this several bright sparks of light gleam like crystals. The keen eye of the detective catches the flashes, and at the same instant a startled cry of mingled rage and despair breaks from the thief. On the floor, in the wreck of the ceiling, is the plunder for which the detectives are seeking. The search ends abruptly, and off to the police station go thief and detectives.

One is almost tempted to say that the thief's ingenuity was worthy of a better ending. Having committed the robbery, he at once made for his lodgings, and cast about for a place to conceal his plunder. Gazing at the ceiling, he was struck with a bright idea, which he instantly put into operation. In his honest days the thief had been engaged in the building trade, and it was no trouble for him to do a little plastering on his own account. Accordingly, with much patient endeavour, he picked away several sections of the ceiling, wetted the plaster, and, when it was sufficiently soft for his purpose, buried the rings and other jewels which formed his haul in the composition. Then, as carefully as possible, he replaced the plaster, only a few small cracks and holes showing where the ceiling had been tampered with. The thief, however, was equal to this emergency. Taking the small penny oil lamp which served to illuminate his room, he lit it and turned up the wick until a thick black smoke poured out of the chimney. Then he held the lamp close to the ceiling, and soon the parts which he had been digging at were as black as the rest of the ceiling.

No wonder he grinned when the detective entered his room, and no wonder he swore when the ceiling fell.

Criminals show a great amount of cleverness in the manner in which they secrete their plunder. In the olden days stolen property was frequently hidden somewhere up a chimney, but that plan has long been played out, and thieves have had to devise new hiding places.

Some of these have been as amusing as they have been clever. Picture a detective searching the house of a thief who was alleged to have stolen a set of silver spoons and other

small articles of plate. The thief, protesting his innocence, coolly waves his hand and bids the officer search wherever he has a mind to. "You've come to the wrong place this time," he remarks. "You'll find nothing here." But the detective

Burying the plunder. Old-fashioned, but by no means out-of-date.

has his suspicions, and searches away with a dogged persistence which causes the thief some alarm. He, however, keeps a straight face. Sometimes his eyes wander to the fireplace, where a couple of pots, the contents of which are sizzling and spluttering over the blaze, suggest that a substantial dinner is being cooked.

An overpowering odour of bacon and greens fills the room, and the detective, as he noses round, thinks that it is nearly time he has his own dinner. But here and there he goes, probing and searching. Nothing, however, rewards his efforts, and he turns to leave the house when the pots on the fire, one of which boils over, attract his attention. "You'll enjoy your dinner," says the police officer to the supposed thief. The latter, feeling secure, overdoes the business. "Rather," he replies, and adds, "It's the finest dinner I ever saw on a table," laughing quietly as he thinks of the "sparklers" amongst the greens. The detective, apparently suspecting nothing, leaves the house, but ten minutes afterwards he returns, and, entering quickly, finds the pots on the hearth and the thief busy with a fork picking up several roughly-made bags, which jingle as they fall on the floor. In a second, as it seems, the clank of steel is heard, and then comes a snap as the "darbies" close on the wrists of the burglar. His dinner has been cooked just a few minutes too soon, and it is left for someone else to eat. He and the bags of stolen jewellery are taken to the nearest police-station, whilst his wife or housekeeper or whatever she happens to be sits down to bacon and greens by herself. The hiding-place of the plunder, in the pots, was distinctly ingenious.

Another thief went even better. He was suspected of a highway robbery, in which the "swag" of the gang who had operated was a magnificent single-stone diamond ring. The detectives paid their visit of inspection, but though they searched high and low, they could not find the gem they were in search of. Probably they would never have recovered it but for the fact that the thief fell out with his paramour. In a revengeful and jealous mood (women are strange creatures) the female left the one room in which she lived with the garrotter, and meeting a well-known detective, whispered a few words in his ear. Going to the apartment, the officer of the law went straight to the cupboard, where a piece of silverside of beef (badly cooked, it may be mentioned) waited the thief's attentions. In the centre of the piece of meat was a round hollow bone ordinarily filled with marrow, but now crammed with fat cut from the joint. The detective's penknife digs away the meat inside the bone, and in a second or so the ring is brought to light.

Yet another thief, and he, it may be remembered, was entirely successful in his ruse, adopted a bold device. When the detectives were heard on the stairs he calmly threw his plunder out of the window of his room on to the "garden" at the back of the house. The jewellery, watches, rings, brooches and bracelets, fell upon heaps of rubbish and into the midst of a flourishing plantation of mint. There it lay exposed to the gaze of anyone who happened along, but though the police searched in every likely and unlikely spot they never thought of turning their attention to the garden, and the man, as he afterwards boasted when "bagged" for another offence, was able to dispose at his ease of the whole of his plunder.

Only a week or two ago a dishonest clerk, who made a fine haul at a west-end jeweller's shop, buried the whole of his plunder under a tree in the neighbourhood of Guildford in Surrey. When arrested the man made a clean breast of the affair, and took the policeman to the spot where he had hidden the treasure.

He was not so artful as another well-known thief, who made off with a well-filled bag of gold and notes. This man at once made tracks for the ruins of some old houses, a landmark in the neighbourhood in which he lived, and proceeded to conceal the swag. The spot had previously struck him as being an excellent place to act as a treasure chamber, and as soon as he had made a haul he put it to the test. In the walls of the houses were ventilating shaft-holes, and after carefully sounding one of these the thief dropped in the notes and gold. As he almost expected, he was "pulled" for the robbery, and in due course sentenced. His term was only a short one, however, and when he was released from prison he made a bee-line straight for his hiding place. It was not a difficult matter to fish up the bag, and, after carefully burning the notes (this is where the Bank of England profited by the robbery) the thief wandered off to fresh fields to spend the gold which remained.

Some years ago a man who murdered the cashier of a colliery as he was returning from the bank with the work-

A cute hiding-place.

men's week's pay in a bag, sought to conceal the proceeds of his crime by burying the money in the back garden of his house. When he dug the hole to receive the cash, he practically dug his own grave. A neighbour saw him digging and told the police, who in turn undertook gardening opera-

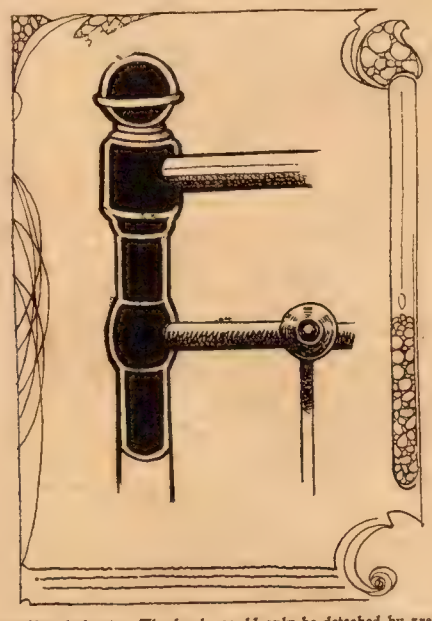
tions. Their discovery of the cash was the principal evidence against the man, who was subsequently hanged for his crime.

The quaintest and probably least suspected hiding-place which a thief has ever adopted came to light a few weeks ago. A servant girl stole her mistress's jewellery, but for a few days she was not suspected of the theft. Detectives who were called in failed to discover any trace of a burglar having called at the house, and so turned their attentions to the servants. The thief, who was a newcomer, was naturally suspected, and as a result closely watched.

She was noticed to spend a good deal of her time in the garden, and that she paid particular attention to a pine tree which was fairly well furnished with birds' nests. At first it was thought that she was amusing herself by studying the methods of the feathered songsters. One of the detectives, however, was struck with another idea, and wondered whether the girl, supposing her to be the thief, had hidden her plunder in or near the tree. Round the base there were no signs that the turf had been recently interfered with, so the detective, more to put his theory to the test than with the idea of finding anything, forthwith climbed up and perched himself on one of the lower branches.

This was quite enough for the servant, who was watching him from a distance. She turned and ran to her mistress, to whom she confessed her guilt, adding that the jewellery was hidden in one of the birds' nests. Sure enough there the missing property was found.

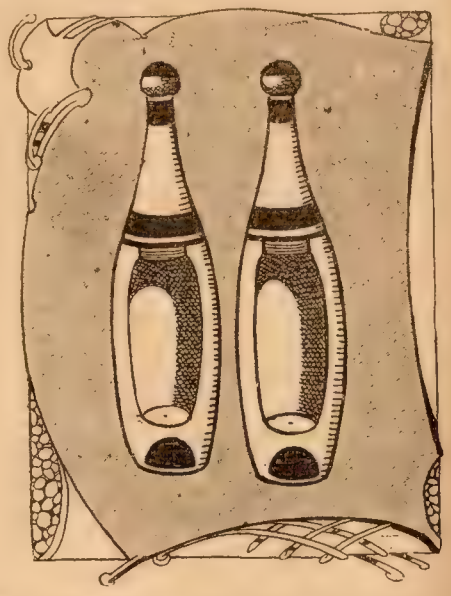
Pickpockets when hard pressed have adopted audacious methods of getting rid of the "swag," or temporarily hiding it. The story is told of "Flash Harry" (that is not his name, but it will serve), who, when spotted "making watches" in a crowd, walked smartly away with the detectives at his heels. In his right hand he held the watch which he had just "lifted," and he knew that it was quite impossible for him to throw it away. So he passed into another small crowd, dropped the ticker into the pocket of a man as he went by, took a note of the man's appearance, and then sauntered into a public-house. A few minutes later he was back in the street again, for he was desperately hard up at the moment, and was determined to get a bit of money before many hours had elapsed, and on the lookout for the unconscious receiver of stolen property. A quick glance round satisfied him that the detectives, who he thought had only happened along accidentally, had vanished. But he made too sure of that



The hollow bedposts. The knobs could only be detached by pressing a secret spring.

fact. The pair of them were watching him closely, and they saw him pick out a man (the one who had the watch), dip his hand into the stranger's coat pocket, and walk away with something which flashed as he transferred it to his pocket. Ten minutes later Harry was in limbo. He had been just a little too clever.

Many other ingenious hiding-places have come to the notice of the police, and several of these are shown in our sketches. The bed-post, hollowed out for the reception of



The hollow Indian clubs. The black cones at bases are made of lead to make up the lost weight.

stolen jewels, and the Indian club, also with a secret hole and a piece of lead to make up the weight of the implement, are particularly clever specimens of a thief's resource.

A Funny Counsel.

A Scotch lawyer named Rae was once defending a prisoner, and in his remarks and questions was somewhat extravagantly funny, not to say witty. The judge said of him at the bar mess, after the court had risen, "He has been to-day not only Rae, but *outré*."

He Hadn't Asked for Soap.

A certain Welsh judge, famous not only for his neglect of personal cleanliness, but also for his intense desire for some good appointment, was once addressed by Mr. Jekyll as follows:

"My dear sir, as you have asked the minister for everything else, why have you never asked him for a piece of soap and a nail-brush?"

He Wouldn't Fight.

Serjeant Davy was once challenged by an infuriated party whom he had grievously offended by his cross-examination and in his speech to the jury, the challenger actually following the learned counsel on to Dorchester and, knocking at a very early hour in the morning at the door of the house where Davy lodged, he walked in as soon as the door was opened, and went from room to room in a violent passion, till he found himself in the chamber where the lawyer was in bed. He opened the curtains and told the serjeant that he knew what his errand was—that he had come to demand satisfaction—that he himself was quite aware that the lawyer was unwilling to give what he demanded, but that he must and would have satisfaction. He was not, he declared, to be appeased by apologies or words; his honour had been assailed, and the satisfaction which one gentleman owed to another gentleman whom he had calumniated he had come to demand and to insist upon.

"Well," said the serjeant from beneath the bed-clothes, "you surely don't mean to fall upon a naked man, unarmed and in bed?"

"Oh, no, sir!" replied the injured one. "You cannot but know in what manner affairs of this kind are conducted between gentleman and gentleman."

"Very right," answered the serjeant; "then as you give me your word of honour that you don't mean to fall on me naked and unarmed, in bed, I give you mine that I will not get out of bed till you are gone out of town and I am in no danger of seeing you again."

WILLIAM ROBERT TAYLOR.

The man who, in 1862, at Manchester, murdered his three children, with the concurrence of their mother, as a preliminary to slaying Mr. Mellor and attempting the life of that gentleman's porter from some obscure motives of revenge.

"The croaking raven
Doth bellow for revenge!"
—SHAKESPEARE, "Hamlet," Act III., Sc. 2.

PROBABLY no sin or passion has led to so many tremendous crimes as that of greed; but revenge—revenge for some fancied slight or wrong—has often been the motive of great murderers, "whose names tradition saves." The notion that revenge is sweet has prompted many a fearful crime, and brought about many a dire tragedy. The desire for vengeance is an ignoble passion, but it exists in more or less degree in nearly all of us, and is one to be curbed, lest we, too, gradually allow it to master us to the exclusion of any kinder thought or tender sentiment. For that way madness lies. A man may brood over some imaginary wrong until the wish to be revenged develops into a mastering passion, of which he is at once the creator and the slave. Then may come the opportunity, the blow may be struck or the knife may be used, and the man, a victim to his own evil passions, becomes a murderer in deed as well as in thought.

Revenge was the motive for a very terrible affair which took place at Manchester in the year 1862. In this case, the man had brooded so long over some wrong which existed only in his fevered imagination, that he had become a prey to a sort of melancholy madness, in which, however, there was sufficient method to breed a fixed resolve. Determined to involve himself and his victim in one common ruin, he first destroyed his own children by some devilish process which the medical testimony was never able to clearly establish, and then waylaid the man he fancied had injured him, and stabbed him to death with far less compunction than most of us would kill a dog.

The almost incredible part of this terrible story is that in all these transactions and in all that led up to them, the man had probably the support, assistance, and advice of his wife, a fitting helpmate to this "raven" bellowing for "revenge!"

We were less anxious to preserve our murderers then than now. This man was hanged, and few were found to cavil at the punishment meted out to him; but it is certain that he would have escaped this fate forty years later. A careful scrutiny of all the circumstances of the case, and a study of the man's antecedents, forces one to the conclusion that this murderer of his own offspring, this calm, calculating assassin, who could not be made to see that he had committed wrong, was about as mad as he well could be. In all the ordinary duties of life he may have been sane enough, but the constant harping upon the "wrongs" that his distorted mind so exaggerated and encouraged had reduced him to a state of virtual insanity, and I venture to think that on these grounds his life would have been spared had he committed these crimes in the present year of grace. But to our story.

In the spring of 1862 there resided in that part of Manchester known as Old Trafford a gentleman of the name of Mellor, as it has been generally spelt, though I believe that Melloe was really this unfortunate person's patronymic. He was a house agent in a prosperous way of business, and was well known and much respected in Manchester and its environs. His offices were situated in the heart of the city—in South King Street, to be exact—and these he occupied with his son, a good-looking young fellow, also very popular in the neighbourhood.

At half-past eight on the morning of May 16, 1862, Mr. Mellor, senior, left Old Trafford to go to his place of business, and arrived there a little after nine o'clock. He ascended the staircase and entered an office on the second floor landing, where his son might be expected to join him about half-past nine. On the staircase he noticed a man and a woman in waiting, and apparently they followed him up to the landing where his office was situated. These two persons were not unknown to Mr. Mellor. They were a man named William Robert Taylor and his wife, Martha Anne Taylor, and the house agent had had some business relations with them. It appears that this couple followed the house agent into his chambers, and entered into some conversation with him regarding some legal action brought by the latter to induce the Taylors to vacate their house. The exact nature of the grievance entertained by the man Taylor shall be explained in due course, and for the moment it will suffice to describe what happened at South King Street.

Taylor spoke rudely to Mr. Mellor, who informed him that "the matter was now out of his hands," that he "could not move in it," and requested his unwelcome visitor to leave the building. The latter immediately made a ferocious attack upon the unfortunate gentleman. He was armed with a formidable knife some ten inches long, and with this weapon he repeatedly struck at Mr. Mellor, inflicting some frightful wounds on his head and chest. Rendered half dazed by the sudden nature of the onslaught, and almost blinded with his own blood, Mellor staggered out of the office, calling loudly for help, and pursued by the frenzied assassin, who stabbed at him again, uttering exclamations all the while, which plainly showed that his mind had long harboured some design against the object of his insensate fury.

During this fearful scene, the woman stood calmly by, looking on, and rather encouraging her husband in his frightful violence.

Mr. Mellor succeeded in reaching the basement of the building, still pursued by the ruffian, and at last his cries and the noise of the scuffling attracted some attention. A porter named Hooley, in the employ of Mr. Mellor and the other occupants of the building, ran to his assistance, and made a rush for the murderer. In the meanwhile, a loaded revolver held by the woman had either been handed by her to her husband or snatched from her by the latter, who fired at once direct at Hooley, the ball lodging in his arm. By this time a number of persons had collected, it was clear that murder was being done, and a general rush was made upon Taylor, who stood confronting them with the smoking pistol in his hand.

During the excitement the woman had slipped away unnoticed, but her ruffianly husband was there, caught red-handed, and he was speedily seized and disarmed.

The two victims of this extraordinary outrage were at once removed to the infirmary, but on the way thither it was ascertained that Mr. Mellor was quite dead. His body being later carefully examined by the medical authorities, it was found that he had been assailed with remarkable violence. He had received no less than eleven incised wounds, of which five at least could have caused almost instant death, they having penetrated deeply into the heart itself. Hooley was severely wounded, the bullet being embedded deeply in his arm, and it was some time before he could be pronounced out of all danger.

In the meanwhile, young Mr. Mellor had arrived at the house, and had confronted the assassin. The unfortunate young man was almost overwhelmed with grief and horror, but the man Taylor, now that the deed was accomplished, displayed a most unnatural calmness, and was heard to express a wish that he could have sent the son to join the father. The police arrived on the spot, and Taylor was removed to the police office, the cab in which he was conveyed there being followed by a running crowd of people anxious to catch a glimpse of this decided and determined murderer. He was interrogated by the chief inspector, and very coolly gave his name and address when they were asked for.

Amongst other trifling articles removed from him when

searched were some keys, and to one of these Taylor pointed, saying that it belonged to a back bedroom in his dwelling, and added that if the officers made a search there they "would find something." No one present guessed or dreamt of the dire import of these few words. Taylor was removed to the cells, and a search instituted for his wife. She was arrested very shortly afterwards, and at once denied all participation in the murder, or even that she knew her husband to be armed when he called upon Mr. Mellor. This, however, could hardly be credited, and she was, of course, detained, to be subsequently tried for the murder together with her husband.

The police officials meanwhile proceeded to the house occupied by this remarkable couple, and there they made a very unexpected and appalling discovery. The Taylors had lived in a part of Manchester then, as now, called Strangeways, close to the great prison of that name. They found the house shut and locked, but were enabled to enter with the keys they had obtained from Taylor, and they were all struck by the sense of silence and desolation which seemed to prevail about the ill-omened premises.

Little wonder!

No merry laugh of young children, no lightsome tread of little feet could be heard resounding through the abandoned rooms. All was dreary silence, and it was observed that the gloom of the place was not relieved by reason of the close drawing of the curtains and window blinds.

Death, in some dreadful, unknown form, was lurking there.

The officers crept stealthily about the place, discovering nothing untoward until they came to a back bedroom, which they opened with the key Taylor had indicated to them. An extraordinary and ghastly sight met their astonished gaze. There was a large bed in the room, and on it were the dead bodies of three children, two girls and a boy, aged respectively twelve, eight, and five years, laid out in clean white nightgowns, with black ribbons round their waists. The spectacle was a mournful one in the extreme, and moved the discoverers—inured to scenes of grief and horror—to tears and expressions of pity. They had evidently been pretty and attractive youngsters, the elder girl particularly so, and their features were not distorted by any of the pains or terrors of death in some violent and sudden form. The expression of each little face was composed and natural, and death may have come to them, mercifully, in their slumber. On the breast of each was pinned a paper stating their names and ages, and on one was the following painfully suggestive scrap of incoherence:

> "We are six, but one at Harpurhey lies, Mellor and Sons are our cruel murderers, but God and our loving parents will avenge us. Love rules here. We are all going to our sister, to part no more."

The upper part of the house disclosed strange signs of the presence of the frenzied Taylor. The walls and staircases were found daubed with black, as if to suggest a house of mourning, and what few objects the upper rooms contained—for the goods and furniture had been sold some time previously under an execution—were all smashed to pieces, as though they had been subjected to the unrestrained fury of a maniac.

REPEATEDLY STRUCK MR. MELLOR, INFLICTING SOME FRIGHTFUL WOUNDS.

The words pinned on the breast of the eldest child were in Taylor's writing, and since it seemed pretty certain that he had slain these innocents, it became necessary to determine what means he had made use of to end their days on earth. This proved a matter of great difficulty, and has never exactly been established, for although Taylor was not averse to talking freely of the Mellor affair, he showed great reticence in regard to the fate of his own poor offspring, and declined to assist the doctors by a statement of any kind.

The trial of the Taylors took place at the summer assizes at Liverpool, with Mr. Baron Wilde as the presiding judge. Great interest was manifested in the case, and it is probable that no murder trial aroused more curiosity—in the great seaport, at least—since the notorious John Gleeson Wilson was sent to his well-merited doom. Ladies seemed particularly anxious to secure advantageous places from which to see the prisoners and mark their varying emotions, and their arrival at the court was the signal for a great rush of people eager to get a sight of the strange man and his almost equally strange wife who had killed his children by some mysterious process unknown and unexplained.

The man was defended by Mr. Pope, and Mr. Overend appeared for the female prisoner. Both, on entering the dock, presented a respectable appearance. Taylor was thirty-seven years of age, slim, of medium height, with a rather

melancholy and cadaverous exterior. He was of dark and sallow complexion, which, added to jet black hair and moustache, and beard of the same ebony hue, gave him a somewhat foreign aspect. Outwardly, he was calm and self-possessed, but he looked down towards his feet for the most part, rarely raising his eyes to encounter those bent curiously upon him. He shifted his position very often during the opening speech of the counsel for the prosecution. His eyes were deep set, and rather close together, and these, together with his dark complexion, gave him a sinister expression, though his features were rather good and regular and the mouth and chin were somewhat weak and indecisive.

Someone who was present at the trial of this man and that of Prince, the murderer of Terriss, the favourite actor, has assured me that—longo intervallo—the two men are remarkably alike in appearance, and, probably, in character, for some imaginary slight made Prince an assassin, and Taylor had the same motive.

Mrs. Taylor was not more than twenty-five years of age—

With the smoking revolver in his hand.

fair-haired, pale, and rather good-looking. She was gaily dressed, and wore a fashionable straw hat, trimmed with large and handsome feathers, and a light veil. She was not the mother of the elder girl, for the man Taylor had been married before, and his first wife had died in giving birth to this child.

On being asked by the Clerk of Arraigns, "How say you, William Robert Taylor, guilty or not guilty?" the latter looked up quickly and made answer in these words, "Not a shadow of guilty!" immediately directing his gaze to the floor again, while the female prisoner responded quietly and in a lady-like voice, "Not guilty." The evidence proved the following facts:

In the summer of the previous year, 1861, Taylor was anxious to remove from his house to another part of the city. He appears to have always been of rather unsettled mind and habits, rarely keeping to one place of residence or to any fixed employment for any length of time. He had been at work at many things, and does not seem to have prospered greatly at any. Desirous of removal to a fresh abode, he consulted Messrs. Mellor and Sons, the house-agents, and by them, acting for the owners, was recommended to the house in Strangeways. Mrs. Taylor went to see the dwelling, and, it being judged suitable to their requirements, she, her husband, and the family took it. At that time there were four children, but in the month of January one of these met with a fatal accident, which undoubtedly first tended to unsettle Taylor's mind. An explosion of the kitchen-boiler occurred, the child in question was severely scalded and otherwise injured, and subsequently died in the infirmary.

The male prisoner appears to have attributed this mishap to the neglect of Mr. Mellor, and insisted, in very violent language, that he was entitled to and meant to obtain compensation. He had required the house to be thoroughly repaired, and this had been done, but Mr. Mellor was not anxious to retain so troublesome and truculent a tenant, and, when the latter volunteered to give up the house, the agents gladly consented. Taylor, agreeing to leave, disagreed with Mr. Mellor as to the value of the fixtures to be left behind, and another cause of friction between tenant and agent was that the former had got in arrears with the rent. Not wishing to be hard upon the man, who had no regular employment at this time, Mr. Mellor kindly consented to forego this part of the rent if only he would give up his possession, but when the latter was delayed time after time an execution was at last put into the house, under which nearly all the goods on the premises were sold. The proceeds of this sale did not meet the arrears of rent and the expenses of the process, and Taylor was dissatisfied as to the bona fides of the sale, and complained to Mr. Mellor in very uncompromising language.

A few days prior to the tragedy both prisoners called at the offices of Mr. Mellor, saying they required a formal account of the sale, the male prisoner remarking that the bailiff's men had "commandeered" some of the articles, and that the rest had been sold below their value. At this interview he was quite calm, and it was elicited in cross-examination—young Mr. Mellor was the witness—that he did not then appear angry or give vent to any threat.

But probably the most melancholy part of this tragical story concerned the fate of the poor children, whose lives had been taken in a manner which baffled the skill of the most famous analysts. Professor Taylor, in his evidence, stated that "the result of a minute investigation was that no poison of any kind was discovered or was present in those portions of the viscera of either child which had been delivered to him for examination," adding that "the state of the bodies, in his opinion, was only consistent with the view that these children had died either from the effects of a poisonous vapour like that of chloroform entering the lungs, or from suffocation or smothering, *i.e.*, by the covering of the mouth and nostrils, so as to prevent respiration." No more decisive explanation of the mystery surrounding the deaths of these children was ever given, and their father and murderer took with him the dread secret to the grave.

The man Taylor, never having made any attempt to deny the slaying of Mr. Mellor, could only be defended upon the grounds of insanity, and these Mr. Pope urged to the very best of his ability. He said that he relied upon the nature and the quality of the acts committed by him as indicating that, at the time, the prisoner was labouring under such a defect of reason as not to be aware that he was doing wrong. He was possessed, it was clear, of one absorbing idea, leading him to believe that the murdered man was responsible for the death of his child by the boiler explosion. He appeared to think that in killing Mr. Mellor he was only avenging his own wrongs, and that he had a perfect right to act in this way. His whole conduct was that of a man unaware of the nature of, regardless of the consequences of, his acts, and that constituted nothing less than actual irresponsibility. The murder of the children—wholly unconnected with his motive for the other crime—was the act of a frenzied man, on the border-land of perpetual insanity. The sacrifice of the children was marked with the deepest pathos combined with the most remarkable indifference. He could not be induced to see where or how he had sinned.

Mr. Pope called some witnesses to show that Taylor was strange and morose in his manner, but apart from the evidence of insanity afforded by the nature of the crimes themselves, there was little to affect the judgment of the jury. Nowadays Taylor's antecedents would have been traced, his relations questioned and interviewed, and I venture to think that had that line of action been general in 1862 this man would have escaped the shameful death he suffered on the gallows and have expiated his offence in some quiet retreat. But autres temps, autres mœurs!

For the female prisoner it was contended that she had taken no actual part in the murder. She had denied from

the first that she had gone to the office of the deceased with any other object than that of complaining against the distraint on their property, and counsel submitted that there was no evidence that she knew of the purpose of her husband's visit. It had not been proved that she was cognisant of or a party to the fate of the children, and it was probable that she had been deceived by her husband in respect to them. She might have been told, and believed, that they had died a natural death.

The learned judge having summed up the evidence in a very impressive manner, the jury returned to consider their verdict, and were not absent long before returning into court with a verdict of "Guilty" against the male prisoner, and of "Not guilty" against the woman.

Some surprise was manifested at the time that the latter was found by the jury not to have participated in these dreadful crimes, for it does seem difficult to believe that she had no knowledge of the intention of her husband. It is true that she struck no blow herself, but she certainly stood by when the deed was done, and she slipped quietly away after its accomplishment. Nor is it easy to swallow the statement that she knew nothing of the fate of the children, or that she calmly and without question accepted it as a fact that they had all died at one and the same moment from natural causes.

No; depend upon it, Mrs. Taylor knew everything, but the law of England always inclines to the merciful view that the wife is more or less under the influence of the husband, and thus this woman escaped any punishment for her tacit, passive participation in these deeds and part in their accomplishment. It is, however, due to her memory to say that Taylor himself declared very positively that she went to the office of the Mellors in ignorance of his intentions.

To the last this malefactor remained unconvinced that he had committed any crime in taking Mellor's life; he declared that he was justified in avenging his child, and that he would not undo the deed if it were possible. He wrote an extraordinary letter prior to his execution, in which he explained, more or less wildly and incoherently, the motives for the crime. He alluded in touching terms to the children, whom he declared were "far better with their Father in heaven than in this sinful world," and spoke of his wife's innocence as regards their death.

The statement indicated in a remarkable manner the excitement of his mind, and does not tend to weaken my view that here was a case where her Majesty's clemency might advantageously have been invoked.

He was hanged at Kirkdale Gaol, meeting his fate with exemplary fortitude. He admitted that he had led a sinful and irregular life, but hoped "that God would forgive him." The chaplain in attendance on the condemned man fervently prayed that God might forgive the act of murder he had committed, and the convict smiled contemptuously and said that act needed no forgiveness. He was perfectly calm and self-possessed in the last dread moments before the lever was pulled, and handed a white, black-bordered handkerchief to the governor of the gaol as a memento, with his compliments and "thanks for much kindness." He died apparently without a struggle, and thus ended the sensational Manchester tragedy of 1862.

Yes; revenge is a dire and dreadful passion, driving to madness and to murder the unlucky being who harbours the desire for it long and closely, and who broods upon his fancied wrong in secret till he thinks of nothing else. As the great poet says:

"Merciful Powers!
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!"

How He Advised Colin.

LORD KAMES was once presiding at a criminal court on the Perth circuit, and after one of the witnesses in a trial for murder had finished his evidence his lordship thus addressed him:

"Sir, I have one question more to ask you, and remember, sir, you are on your solemn oath. You say you come from Brechin?"

"Yes, my lord."

"When do you return thither?"

"To-morrow, my lord."

"Do you know Colin Gillies?"

"Yes, your lordship; I know him very well."

"Then tell him that I shall breakfast with him on Tuesday morning."

Criminal Problems

THE PUNISHMENT OF ALIENS.

CLOSELY allied to the subject of transportation is that of the punishment of aliens. In days when exile was the customary penalty for any political offence, the man who was banished from his own country sought an asylum in some other State, where, so long as he refrained from mixing up in the political struggles of his adopted country, he was at liberty to live in peace. The principle of exile, however, is wrong. No nation has a right to pass on her undesirables to another Government; apart from the false law involved, it is a mean thing to do, to say the least of it. This was soon recognised; for exile for criminal offences was abandoned in the very earliest ages. The alien question, however, arose, not from the political refugees, but from the advent of the fugitives from justice from other lands.

How are we to punish aliens who break our laws? In the same manner as offenders belonging to our own country, or as malefactors of a different stamp?

Surely, it will be urged, a man has a perfect right to dwell in any country he may feel inclined to, and should only be answerable to that country's laws in the same manner as are the free-born citizens of that land. This sounds very plausible, but it is incorrect. Certainly a man has a perfect right to dwell in any portion of the globe he may desire to, but always provided that he strictly conforms to the laws of that land. The moment he breaks any of the ordinances laid down, he at once comes under the ban of the law, and in determining his punishment his nationality must be considered.

By the very nature of communal life, the people have to bear the expense of a certain proportion of wrong-doers, and have to pay for their proper punishment, that the laws, made for the protection of all, may be properly upheld. But it must be remembered that they are only called upon to support a certain proportion; not every vagabond who may come into the country. The social contract makes it incumbent on us to correct our own offenders, and to strive to convert them into useful members of our own State, and that without undue harshness. In no way, however, are we compelled to attempt to reform criminals who come to us from other countries, and who can never be of the slightest use to our own country. They are bound to us by no tie, and beyond the common bond of humanity, have no claim on us. The outraged majesty of our law must be revenged, lest the evil example of the alien corrupt our own peaceable citizens. Nay, more; in punishing the foreigner we have no obligation to attempt to reform him—that is the work of his own compatriots. We are, therefore, entitled to make our punishment deterrent, and we may be said to be forced to do so in justice to ourselves, to prevent other disreputable aliens making our country an asylum. Were it not so, there is nothing to prevent those who prosper by, say, forgery taking up their abode in a country where special facilities are offered to the forger, and where the punishment for the crime is light. And so on with other offences. The penal code of a nation is adapted to suit its own inhabitants, and the normal offences of those inhabitants; the peculiarities and tendencies of other races are not taken into consideration in framing the table of punishments. We have, therefore, to consider how to protect ourselves from the foreign criminal. This resolves itself into two sections; the treatment of those who are known to have offended against the laws of their own land, but have not broken our statutes, and the punishment of those aliens who have committed a crime in this country.

With regard to the first case. It should be possible for a properly constituted board to deny admission to British dominions to any foreigner who has been convicted of an offence in his own country, due regard being had to the gravity of the offence of which he was found guilty. Such convictions should be marked on the individual's passport, without which no alien should be allowed to land. Many foreign countries insist that all Englishmen should carry passports, and why should not we make passports or letters

of identification a sine quâ non for those who intend to enter our country? America strives to protect herself by excluding known criminals from her shores; but except in the case of very notorious offenders she has a difficulty in discovering the known criminal, and ignores the fact that it is the persistent petty offender who gives the most trouble and is the greatest expense to the nation. If we adopted the passport system, we could feel fairly certain that only a few previously convicted aliens entered our dominions.

But if the foreigner has not been convicted of a crime in his own country, and, giving evidence of apparent respectability, is allowed to settle down in Great Britain, but later breaks our laws, how should he be dealt with?

We have said that, inasmuch as we have nothing to gain by reforming the alien, and also since he is putting the community to an expense which is not called for in the ordinary course of events, we are entitled to make his punishment deterrent. For minor misdemeanours, involving no serious breach of the law, and possibly arising from ignorance, the "stranger that sojourneth within our gates" might be dealt with as if he were a Briton, being at the same time warned that he is rendering himself liable to severer penalties. If he persist in his petty breaches of the law, causing trouble and annoyance, he should be deported to his own country, and informed that if he return to our shores he will be severely dealt with. As to a time-limit of good behaviour in his own land, entitling him to re-admission to Great Britain, being established in the case of very petty offenders, opinions differ, and it is a detail which could easily be settled after a short trial.

The more serious law-breaker must be dealt with in a drastic fashion. The ordinary penalties included in our penal code should not apply to him, but there should be a far severer scale of punishment—one calculated to make Great Britain the very last place a criminal would select to commit a crime in—laid down, ample discretion being given to the judges to "make the punishment fit the crime." As a guiding principle, however, it may be said that under no circumstances should the penalty inflicted be less than the criminal would have rendered himself liable to if convicted of the same offence in his native land. Added to this, in every case the sentence should direct that when the enhanced punishment has been served, the prisoner should be deported, and forbidden ever to enter our dominions again under penalty, on summary conviction, of again having to serve his sentence of imprisonment.

The adoption of these measures, harsh as they may appear, would undoubtedly have the effect of keeping the scum of the Continent out of our country, while they would not prevent the peaceable, well-behaved foreigners, who really do much good to this land, from coming to Great Britain as at present. If, however, we lay down stringent regulations to repress alien crime in our midst, we must expect that foreign nations will retaliate by enforcing somewhat similar measures in their own countries. Nor can we complain, but rather should rejoice that they should do so, for our own criminals being forced to remain under the English law, being compelled to dwell where their record is known to the police, it should be far easier for us to carry on that reformation which should be the end of our penal code. Possibly the habitual criminal would not appreciate our efforts made on his behalf, but that is a mere detail; in the end it would be exceedingly good for the country in general, and we should find that crime would steadily decrease in our midst.

LEAVES FROM . . OUR NOTEBOOK

Had He but Waited!

A MAN who insists on leaving his friends too early when there is plenty remaining to drink is often chaffed and twitted with the fate of being hanged for declining good liquor, like the saddler of Bawtry.

It is recorded that there was once a famous public-house called "The Gallows Tree," situated between the City of York and the place where criminals suffered, and where the condemned and his friends always pulled up to refresh the inner man. A saddler, on his way to be hanged, refused to partake of any liquor, and the procession hastened on to the scene of execution. He was no sooner hanged than a reprieve arrived, and had he but stopped as was usual at the hostelry, the pardon would have arrived in time to save him from his dreadful fate.

Death for Elopers.

UP to the thirteenth century any English girl who eloped with her chosen lover was liable to be put to death if captured, and that with only the scantiest form of trial. In theory the same penalty is, even to this day, deserved by girls in Mohammedan countries who take the arrangement of their own nuptials into their own hands, though, excepting in semi-barbarous countries, such as Morocco and Tunis, the strict legal penalty would not be enforced. Not very many years ago it was reported that a daughter of the Sultan of Turkey had escaped from the royal harem with a male companion, and strenuous efforts were made to induce her to return to her father's dominions, but the maid was wise and refused to do so, knowing full well that death awaited her if once she was in the power of the Turkish monarch. Chinese law gives to parents power of life and death over their children, and should Ah Sing choose to slay his daughter because she fled with Wung Tong, he would have a perfect right to do so.

"Pit and Gallows."

IN the charters constituting certain lords of the manor may be found clauses giving them the right of "pit and gallows," a right also enjoyed by the abbots of many of the monasteries before the days of the Reformation, and also one of the necessary privileges of the barons and higher peers. The gallows is easily enough understood in these days, but the pit is less obvious. It is clear enough, however, when we mention that in the middle ages, the pit, or well, was the place of execution for female offenders, who were drowned. Occasionally the penalty was also inflicted on men. Parricides, however, were generally drowned; the sentence ordaining that they should be tied up in a sack and cast into the sea, or into running water. On the Continent drowning was more popular than in England, where the penalty died out early in the sixteenth century, though in Scotland it survived until 1685. Austria clung to water as a means of executing criminals till 1776, and so did Russia. Iceland last drowned a man in 1777, and in parts of Germany the penalty was in force till almost the dawn of the nineteenth century. Saxony decreed that infanticides should be drowned, together with certain ceremonies. Thus we find that a child murderer was enclosed in a sack, with a cat, a dog, and a snake, and then cast together into a pond and drowned. From these examples it will be seen that the relation between the pit and the gallows differed widely from what it is nowadays.

Strange Modes of Choosing Executioners.

IN mediæval times a man about to be married might be seen studying the list of criminals awaiting trial, and also striving to find out if anybody was likely to get married directly after him, for the unpleasant office of general executioner devolved on the most recently made bridegroom, who held office until the next wedding was celebrated. Civic honour carried with it the duty of hangman at Reutlingen, in Swabia, even in comparatively modern times; for the last chosen town councillor had to act as temporary finisher of the law. Stedien, in Thuringia, conferred the unenviable post on the last arrived resident, to ensure him being of some use to the community which he had joined. As late as 1740, the most aged of the murdered party's relatives was deputed to behead the murderer if the sentence had to be carried out at Buttstadt. In bygone ages, too, it was no uncommon thing for the judge who had condemned a man to carry out the sentence himself, a principle which obtains to-day when Judge "Lynch" holds his court, for the jury generally have the task of stringing up the condemned. Criminals were frequently told off to slay one another, a survival of the gladiatorial days of Rome, and in the sixteenth century Coligni condemned a number of Franciscan friars, who had offended him, to hang one another; who despatched the last monk is not recorded.

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

HYDROQUINONE.—You may not photograph a bank-note for any purpose.

PHILO.—There is much difference between an executioner and an executor.

LIVERPUDLIAN.—The name of the vessel on which Roger Tichborne sailed was the *Bella*. Roger was educated at Stonyhurst College.

RATCATCHER.—Yes; the prisoner had tamed a mouse which the warder killed. The prisoner was tried for attempting in his rage to murder the warder, but he was acquitted.

WINDSOR.—These are the names of the men who tried to assassinate Queen Victoria:—O'Connor, Oxford, Bean, Francis, Pate and McLean. The Queen paid for the defence of the latter.

TOXICOLOGIST.—It is only supposed that colchicum was the poison used by Catherine Wilson to kill her numerous victims. As no trace of the poison was ever discovered in the bodies, there was always some doubt on the point.

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